

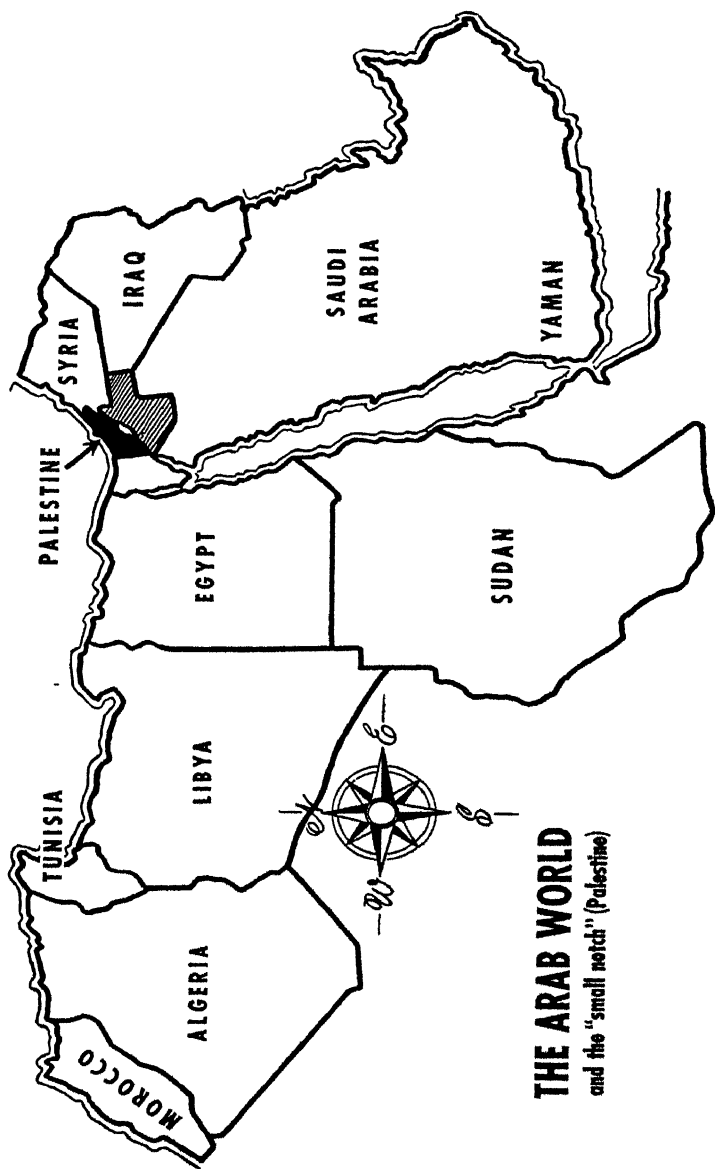
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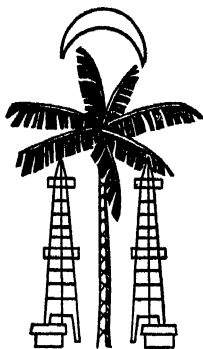
INSIDE PAN-ARABIA



THE ARAB WORLD
and the "small notch" (Palestine)

Inside Pan-Arabia

By
M. J. Steiner



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To Regi and Donnie

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
1 The Arab World	3
2 The Desert Strikes Again	25
3 Western Hegemony a Fact	32
4 The Phantom of Pan-Islam	42
5 Arabs in World War I	52
6 Ibn Saud's Heroic Ascent	63
7 Cradle of Arab Nationalism	78
8 The Hotbed of Iraq	91
9 Palestine, The Holy Land of Unholy Machinations	103
10 Along the Nile	124
11 The Slumbering Maghreb	141
12 Sawdust "Protector of Islam"	150
13 Hitler's "Drang nach Sued-osten"	159
14 The Mufti's Frozen Fifth Column	167
15 Cutting the Palestinian Knot	180
16 Pan-Arabia, Myth and Reality	196
17 The Arab World and Democracy	208
Index	225

Introduction

It was Lord Curzon who made the memorable statement after World War I that "the Allies floated to victory on waves of oil." This vivid and rather poetic phrase proved to be even more pertinent in World War II. Had it not been for the oil of Iraq and Iran, or the high-octane gasoline of the United States, our tanks and planes would certainly have not been able to turn back Rommel's panzers at Al-Alamain. That precious liquid made possible the colossal production of weapons in the United States, without which victory over the Axis would have been but a dream. Oil overcame the submarine menace; oil enabled us to carry Lend-Lease materials and equipment to the Russians at Stalingrad, and to land our invasion fleet on the North-African coast. Could there have been a D-day in Europe without the countless tanks and tankers filled with gasoline? Or would Fortress Europa have crumbled under the blows of our air-armada without the ample stocks of oil stored in the United States? And what was the magic fluid that made the superforts drone over Tokyo? Again and again — oil.

Ever since Lord Fisher put the British fleet on an oil basis, petroleum has been a mighty factor in international politics, and very often a cause of discord among nations. Governments raced for foreign oil, for it turned out to be not only a source of handsome income but also the very life-blood of empires, so vitally needed for their national security.

The British were the first to realize the national and international importance of oil. Unlike Russia and the United States, they lacked oil within their own borders. After

World War I they became the dominant power in the Middle East as well as masters of the richest oil region in the world. They seized the lion's share of the Iranian and Iraqi "black gold," holding 52.50% of its stocks, the French and American companies dividing the rest almost equally.

World War II made the United States government more oil-conscious than ever before. The rapid consumption of domestic supplies for waging this global war and the realization that the government would have to take a hand in shaping a definite oil policy, especially with regard to foreign oil, brought about the formation of the agency known as the "Federal Petroleum Reserves Corporation." This corporation was formed in 1943, when Arabian oil began making exciting headlines, spurting geysers of heated debates all over the country.

Out of the darkness of the "Arabian Nights" one fact stood out clear. American companies gained vital concessions in Arabia, breaking the oil cartel known as the "Red Line Agreement" of 1928, thereby challenging the British oil hegemony in the Middle East. These concessions meant a great deal not only to the private companies but also to the government of the United States. One noted American petroleum geologist has estimated that twenty billion barrels of oil are buried under the sands of Arabia. If so, Arabian "black gold" equals all known American deposits, and according to some experts it may even surpass all our underground reserves.

In 1943 alarming voices were heard to the effect that within two or three decades the oil-wells of the United States would go dry. Some alarmists went even further, asserting that all the stores of natural oil within our borders, plus the maximum production of synthetic gasoline, would by no means be sufficient to meet our domestic needs.

Whether these voices of doom were justified or not, several conclusions had to be drawn. It has become apparent

that oil is vitally necessary for waging war, or, in other words, it is the very life blood of our national security. Secondly, the future well-being of this country depends upon oil. Machines of all kinds—harvesters, cars, trucks, planes, need oil. Synthetic rubber, alcohols, plastics, resins, and many chemicals consume vast quantities of oil. Thirdly, oil will be one of the essentials of world security even in a world-at-peace. This is true not only because gasoline will have to supply the machines for keeping peace, but also, and perhaps primarily, because post-war world economy will depend upon an equitable distribution of oil by the three greatest producers in the world, the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1943 the United States government was planning to build a \$150,000,000 pipe-line which would transfer oil from the Arabian oil-fields to a Mediterranean port, somewhere in Egypt or in Palestine. This project touched off a most acrimonious debate in Congress and in the press. Some private oil companies, as well as members of Congress, opposed the plan on the ground that government control of the pipe-line would precipitate political explosions and lead to international complications; and many a journalist raised the bogey of "American imperialism in the Middle East." Only future events will tell whether those apprehensions were based on realities, or merely represented a propaganda-kite flown by interested groups. In any event, one fact stood out undisputedly in that oil-rush. The United States government itself became politically involved in a far-away region and entered an area which hitherto had been an exclusive domain of the British Empire. Ibn Saud is said to have received from the United States a grant of \$25,000,000, not counting the handsome supplies under Lend-Lease and a \$10,000,000 loan.

What complications will evolve, for this country as well as for the world, because of this entrance of the United

States into the orbit of the Middle East? Will American participation in shaping the policies of the Middle East constitute a stabilizing factor in that troublesome and undeveloped region, or will it add fuel to some eventual explosion?

These questions can not easily be answered on the threshold of the Atomic Age. It is quite possible that the harnessing of atomic energy and its eventual world-control will eclipse the importance of oil and greatly reduce its calamitous role in world power-politics. This may also ease the political tension in the Mediterranean basin, and particularly in the Arab World which has been a *terra incognita* to the American people. The oil rush in recent years, our military help to the hard-pressed British in Egypt in 1941, and the landing of our armies in North Africa brought a far-away world closer home. On the whole, however, this world is little known to us, but it is undoubtedly going to be more and more in the limelight, because it is the most famous thoroughfare of civilization, the cradle of three monotheistic religions, and a likely trouble-spot in the future. It is no longer a fantasy, or the land of the "Thousand and One Nights." It is, in the words of a well-known British author, "a geographical, strategic, religious, and political fact." And because so many factors are involved in that area, a great many problems must be solved in order to avoid an explosion in this region where Britain, the United States, and Russia have been destined to meet. Britain will by no means give up her interests in the Middle East; and particularly after this war, she is finding more and more justification for staying there. For as a Great Power responsible for *world* security, Great Britain deems it her sacred duty to stand guard on a powerful bridge which spans the Near East and Far East and constitutes a vital center in global airways. Russia, likewise, has recently displayed a deep interest in the Middle East. As a result of

high military and political pressure she has gained vital oil concessions in Northern Iran and she has revoked her treaty with Turkey with a view of securing an outlet through the Dardanelles to the warm waters of the Mediterranean. In Syria and Palestine, too, the Soviet Union has made several diplomatic moves, even renewing contact with the Greek-orthodox missions established there by Tsarist Russia.

The opening of a Russian legation in Cairo, in 1944, was certainly looked upon by the British as an unwelcome penetration into their sphere of influence. With the disappearance of Fascist Italy as a "Moslem" power, the Russians seemed eager to step into the role as a new "Protector of Islam." It is perhaps in line with the Soviet change of policy toward religion in general that Russian envoys in the Middle East do not shun harping on Islamic sentiments. Nicolai Novicoff, who was appointed head of the Soviet legation in Cairo, is a specialist in Moslem studies, and Abdul Rahman Sultanoff, his secretary, is said to be a "pious" Moslem. In a pamphlet entitled "Russia, a Moslem Power" which has been circulating recently in the Middle East, the new Soviet trend in regard to the Moslem world is quite evident. The hitherto "atheistic" regime takes pains to emphasize the fact that Russia with its thirty million Moslem citizens is a "Moslem" power.

Renascent France does not intend to forego its political and cultural interests in Syria and Lebanon. Great Britain would certainly like to take under her aegis these two Levantine countries. A clear indication to the world that the United States was to become an interested party in the Mediterranean basin was conveyed by President Roosevelt's meetings with Ibn Saud and King Faruk, after the conference at Yalta. Will American interests in that region coincide with those of the British Empire? Furthermore, there looms the problem of Palestine which carries seeds

of continuous unrest unless resolutely solved by the United Nations. And what measure of cooperation in building a lasting peace can the United Nations expect from the newly-created Arab States which lack experience in international affairs?

In this connection, and for the sake of a realistic policy in the Middle East, we must not forget that in the most crucial period of this war the peoples of the Arab World stood aloof, as if this Armageddon were not of their concern. But this detachment was not mere aloofness. At times it turned into open hostility toward the democracies. We recall the dire situation of the Allies when Rommel's panzers were threatening the very gates of Alexandria. One can only imagine what might have happened had Hitler succeeded in breaking through that strategic arc which extended from Libya to the Caucasus. The Allies might never have seen the dawn of victory, and the Near East would surely have witnessed a bloody scene in which democracy and civilization would have perished. It is beyond doubt that the Quislings of the Arab World would have performed the *coup de grace* in that act of slaughtering civilization.

Whence that strange and aloof neutrality of the Arabs? What are the forces behind the Arabian Sphinx? Do the Arabs, or Arab-speaking peoples form a self-conscious block with a specific goal? Why were they ready and eager to stab democracy in the back? Can the Arabs unite in a common cause? Why did they not add their strength to the power of democracy? Are they willing and able to take part in rebuilding the world after the war, in the spirit of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter?

This is a set of challenging questions, questions which confront not merely the experts on the Middle East, but also the average American who takes an interest not only in the affairs of his own country, but in world affairs as well. The answers are difficult, and one cannot even attempt to arrive

at definite conclusions unless he comprehends the Arab problem and analyzes thoroughly the factors which for centuries have shaped the destiny of the Arab World. For not everything has to do with oil in the Middle East.

This book is an attempt to delve into some of the recesses of the Arab World, placing particular emphasis on its political realities.

INSIDE PAN-ARABIA

1

The Arab World

Among the 240,000,000 Moslems in the world, the Arab-speaking peoples stand as the foremost champions of Islam and racially the closest kin to Muhammad, originator of the Moslem faith and founder of the Arab State. Who are these Arabs, or the Arab-speaking peoples?

We often speak of the "Arab World" as of something solid, compact, and self-conscious. Such a concept, however, is not based upon scientific foundations, for the "Arab World" does not constitute a geographical, racial, national, or even a religious entity.

The domain of Arab expanse is extremely vast and occupies territories of great importance to world strategy and world trade. These countries, clustered around the Mediterranean basin, the Persian Gulf, and the Arabian Sea, divided by high-peaked mountains, deserts, and seas, can hardly be considered a geographical entity. Arabia, Iraq, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Sudan, Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco are spread over two continents, each one geographically divergent from the other and even divergent in itself. What, for instance, has barren Hejaz in common with the fertile Nile banks, or with the adjacent Yaman on one peninsula? Or, what is the geographical factor that could link Morocco with Kuwait?

This vast space which Arab-speaking peoples claim to be their world covers about 3,344,000 square miles, an area even larger than continental United States. The inhabitants of that area, whose number does not exceed 48,000,000 are erroneously referred to as Arabs. A brief glance at the his-

torical development of Arab expansion, however, will prove that the overwhelming majority of those "Arabs" have nothing in common with the Arab stock.

In the complex problem of the Arab race, one fact is indisputable, namely, that the cradle of the Arabs is the Arabian Peninsula. One particular part of this peninsula, which is known as Arabia Deserta, has made exciting history from the dawn of human civilization to modern times. The most spectacular thrust from the Arabian Desert occurred in the Seventh Century A.D. Both in scope and consequences, this thrust has no equal in human history.

But it was not the southwest, the so-called Arabia Felix, from which the Arabs swarmed out for world conquest, for the southwest with a cultural past and a sedentary mentality did not possess that nomadic unrest of the North. The ancient Minaeans, Sabaeans, Qatabanis, and others were rather settled elements and had been in contact with cultural centers like Egypt, Palestine, and Greece, exporting their frankincense and other spices. Inscriptions in Aramaic, Hebrew, Syriac, and Lihyani prove that the cultural level of the south was relatively high and that this corner of Arabia had known many peoples of different origins.

Racially the predominant type in the south was the Hamitic man, roundheaded (brachycephalic), dark, with wavy hair, and elliptical face. Here was the realm of Qahtan's descendants. Their language is closer to Ethiopic than to that of the Koran. Small wonder that the Yaman has preserved its characteristic uniqueness to modern times. It is the north that has written the most brilliant chapter in Arab history, for there was spread the domain of the nomads, the Bedouins. Racially they had nothing in common with the south. They belonged to the Mediterranean race, being distinctly longheaded (dolicephalic). Najd was the abode of "pure-blooded" Arabs. In other parts, the Armenoid type was not rare.

Since this is the racial compound of Arabia, we can hardly speak of an Arab race, for anthropologically the Arabs are no race at all. No doubt, the Mediterranean sub-race has its largest share in Arab stock, but the Armenoid and Negroid types are very distinctive. Indeed, it is difficult to find a pure specimen of any of those three different types, and a trip through the Arab-speaking countries will convince anyone of the nonsense of talk of an Arab race. The head-form, which is the most important criterion in distinguishing races or sub-races, is not only dolicephalic and brachycephalic, but mesocephalic as well. The skin colors comprise brown, olive, white, and pinkish. Nose forms range from aquiline to convex. Stature is not uniform either, short, medium, and tall being amply represented. Looking at the faces of the Arab-speaking people, one finds in them a variety of elliptical, round, and hatchet-shaped.

On the other hand, one can not deny the existence of some specific qualities of the Arabs, qualities which are commonly connoted as "racial." Those qualities, however, are not a result of specific anthropological features, but rather constitute mental phenomena which evolved from geographical conditions of the barren desert, eternal struggle against enemies, or contact with higher forms of civilization.

The foremost feature of the Arab is extreme individualism. This individualism, bred by desert life, is a highly unsocial feature, and borders on anarchy. There is no authority or discipline for the Arab. No system, but the individual with the might of his right arm, rules the Arab tribe. Along with the extreme individualism goes the quick temper of the Arab, which in turn is responsible for a volatile mind bereft of systematic reasoning.

Two other qualities, which are also common to other Semitic peoples, particularly to the Jews, have become the racial traits of the Arabs—a simple and austere mono-

theism and a moral outlook. Of course, the two social groups, the nomads and the settlers, have developed different psychologies, but in principle those qualities apply to both groups.

There has always been a bitter struggle between the desert and the sown. The Bedouin, who regards raiding and plundering a sacred principle of his freedom, despises the settler and what the settler calls civilization. But, nonetheless, those "racial" qualities are common to both groups. The tribe, being the social unit of the Bedouin since days immemorial, is the root of proverbial Arab particularism. This particularism, as reflected in absolute adherence to the tribe, is in essence the same feature which characterizes Arab towns or regions. Thus local patriotism has been kept alive by interest of numerous clans, families, dynasties, sects, city-states, etc.; even modern nationalism of the Arabs could not get rid of that narrow regionalism.

The Arab conquest, which carried swarms of tribesmen far beyond the Peninsula, brought the Arab stock into contact with other "races." The Arabs intermarried freely, but the native populations of the conquered countries, though Arabicized linguistically, have not absorbed a great share of Arab stock. It is not our purpose to delve into the depths of this complex problem throughout the centuries. What we know at present, however, is that in such Arab countries as Syria and Iraq, which are regarded as the centers of genuine Arab nationalism, Arab stock is far from being prevalent. They are rather a Babel of different "races." In the Arab speaking countries of Africa, Arab stock is negligible. The bulk of the Egyptians belong to the "Nilotic" stock, and the white Berbers, who constitute the majority of Morocco, have preserved their racial character to this day. Those who speak of an Arab race, or even of a Mediterranean sub-race, will have to content themselves with the admission that the only "pure-blooded"

Arabs are those of Najd and surrounding tribes, whose number will not exceed 2,000,000.

The heterogeneity of the Arab World is even more evident from the national angle. The term "Arab nation" would apply today to the inhabitants of the Peninsula. But even this grouping is subject to doubt, for there is no political or religious unity among the two greater states and the numerous principalities of the Arab Peninsula.

The development of Arab nationalism in the last two decades is largely responsible for the multiplicity of the Arab-speaking nations. Allegiance to a particular country or region rather than to some intangible Arab unity, has coined such terms as Egyptians, Iraqis, Syrians, etc. The hyphenated forms used in previous years, as Egyptian-Arabs, or Syrian-Arabs, have disappeared with the rise of nationalism in the Arab-speaking countries. A similar trend is also evident in the Maghreb (North Africa), although nationalism has not taken deep roots there.

Outside Arabia, where the Arabs alone are the sole masters of their homeland because no alien nationality mars the Arab homogeneity, all Arab-speaking countries face the problem of alien nationalities. Iraq has its Kurds, Turks, Persians, and Jews. Syria has Lebanese, Druzes, Alouites, Armenians. In Egypt there are Christian Copts, and Europeans of various nationalities. More than one-third of the population of Palestine is Jewish. Morocco is well on its way to developing a Berberic nation. Some of those nationalities, for instance, the Lebanese, have won complete independence as they are ever dissociating themselves from Arab unity and are placing particular emphasis on their Phoenician origin. A similar aspect may be applied to the Jews in Palestine, who are there a nation, and even a state, in the making. Even such religious-territorial minorities as the Druzes and Alouites are striving for complete independence, refusing to be fused into an Arab nation.

What, then, have those Arab-speaking countries in common? First, religion. The faith of Muhammad binds the Arabs together, though Islam as a religion is split in numerous schisms and sects, a fact which breeds a great deal of political dissension. The political instability in Iraq and Syria, and the lack of cooperation of the various states within Arabia proper may be attributed to the unavoidable friction among the different sects. In Iraq it is the Shi'ya-majority which resents being ruled by the Sunni-minority. Syria's political troubles are also due to the numerous religious sects as the Sunnis, Alouites, Druzes and many others. Hejaz in Arabia, which is Sunni, is dissatisfied with the rule of the "heretic" Wahhabi. Similarly, Zaidi-Yaman looks askance upon the Wahhabi creed. And the Ibadi creed of Oman is hostile to the Zaidi.

The second common bond is the Arabic tongue. It is not the spoken language, however, with its numerous dialects, but rather the literary language of the Koran that arouses in the Arab World a feeling of unity.

The third unifying factor is some common historical memory of Arab glory. Syria, for instance, is proud of the Omayyads, because Damascus was once the center of Arab glory. But Arabia proper, or Iraq, would not share the same memories. Iraq would certainly point to Baghdad, to the seat of the Abbasids as their heritage, and Arabia will glorify the Medina caliphate as the one true symbol of past Arab greatness.

The fourth unifying factor is, no doubt, hatred of Western penetration. This hostility, sometimes concealed and sometimes quite bitter and aggressive, can not be minimized. It has proved the most vital force of the Arab-speaking peoples in their rather haphazard struggle for independence.

Are these and some other factors sufficient to weld the Arab speaking peoples into a common political entity? An-

swering this question requires understanding of some aspects of the history of the Arabs and, particularly, a study of their original homelands whence Muhammad's mission was carried far beyond the boundaries of the Peninsula. It is generally assumed that Arabia was the cradle of all Semitic peoples. Hence, because of economic pressure and perhaps some spiritual factors, Semitic tribes had been migrating from the desert into the sown, allured by the green pastures of the "Fertile Crescent." Those migrations seem to point to a process of infiltration, but in certain periods they reached their peak, assuming a character of mighty waves which occurred almost regularly in millennial intervals.

About 3500 B.C. the first wave, known as the Hyksos-Akkadian migration, surged toward Egypt and Babylon, swept away the civilized strongholds of the Sumerians, and laid the foundation for several kingdoms built on the ruins of a non-Semitic race. But those Semitic tribes did not leave the desert for the sole purpose of satisfying their lust for booty. They proved to possess some quest for a more sublime goal in life. Unlike the Tartars, who looted and destroyed for the sake of destruction, those Semites did not throw overboard the cultural assets of their vanquished foe. To the contrary, they possessed the intrinsic quality of absorbing foreign ideas and adjusting them to their own liking. They knew how to produce an original fabric, although heavily interwoven with well concealed foreign fibres. The upshot of the first Semitic migration was some contribution to the Egyptian and Babylonian cultures. The Babylonian Semites who absorbed the Sumerian civilization produced the arch and vault, and developed a system of weights and measures.

Approximately a thousand years later came the second wave, the so-called Canaanite migration. Those tribes, known as Amurru, stretched their empire from Palestine to the Euphrates. The might of those Semites reached its

peak as their King Hammurabi founded the Babylonian Empire about 2000 B.C. The Khabiru-Hebrew tribes had some share in that migration, as has been proved in a Hittite document found at Baghazkoy which mentions the Hebrew soldiers in the service of the Babylonian Kings about 2600 B.C. The code of Hammurabi, which was an outgrowth of this period, laid the foundation for ancient legislature. The epic of Gilgamesh was another glorious contribution of the Babylonian Semites in the realm of fine literature. The Phoenicians and the Sinaitic Semites, another undulation of the second "wave," contributed to world civilization the alphabet, that supreme vehicle of human thought, which more than any other invention, made human progress possible.

About 1500 B.C. as the Aramaic wave surged into the "green zone," and the conquest of Palestine by the Hebrews began, the foundation was laid for one of the greatest exhibits of Divine spirit in the history of mankind. The Hebrews, who cultivated the Promised Land with great zeal, produced the Holy Bible as a divine expression of the most lofty ideals which the civilized world has known to this day. Not only is the Hebrew Bible the fundament of Christianity and Islam, but it is also the Book that was destined to sway the course of Western civilization.

Another millennium elapsed before the Arabs began to appear in the "Fertile Crescent" as raiders and settlers. In biblical times those Arab raiders had frequently dented the sown, causing a great deal of trouble to all cultivators around the desert. But it was not until the Fifth Century B.C. that the Arab-Nabataens settled on the East side of the Jordan, establishing the metropolis of Petra, "hewn in a rock." They even founded a kingdom which survived to 106 A.D., when Trajan reduced it to a Roman province. Influenced by Syriac culture, those Nabataens developed a

cursive script of Aramaic origin, which finally became the script of the Koran and of modern Arabic.

All those "migrations" furnished fresh blood and vital forces, contributing a great deal to the cultural heritage of the civilized world. But the desert had not changed. Nor had its dynamic forces been exhausted. The tribes stayed fruitful and multiplied. As the Sixth Century drew to a close, Arabia gave birth to a new force which shook the foundations of the whole civilized world. This new force, Islam, once released from the boundaries of the Peninsula, swept across three continents carrying the desert warriors as far as Marrakesh in Africa, the Pyrenees in Europe, and Trans-Oxania in Asia.

Wherein lies the secret of this most startling conquest in world history? Undoubtedly, a number of factors and opportune moments accounted for this success. Arabia in the Sixth Century was not a *tabula rasa* as far as culture and religion are concerned. The south had a tradition of an ancient culture. Besides, it had been for a long time subjected to the rival pressures of Judaism and Christianity. There was even a Jewish dynasty in the Yaman. Already in the fourth century Jewish influence upon the royal house of the Yamanite kings was strong enough to convert them to Judaism. One of those Jewish kings, Dhu Nuwas, who died in 525, gained fame as a clever, courageous, and devoted ruler of his country. Jewish and Christian influence fought for hegemony in Najran. Very strong Jewish settlements had existed for centuries at Taima and Yathrib (Medina). It was the Jews who taught the Arabs of the north cultivation of the soil. Some Jewish tribes possessed model palm groves which aroused the envy of their Arab neighbors. Some Arab tribes were converted to Judaism.

The majority of the Arab tribes, however, were pagans. Neither Judaism nor Christianity appealed to them. Ap-

parently both systems, having assumed a strictly theological character, were too complicated and too moralistic for the simple mind of the Arab and did not jibe with his desert-moral, which was based on the sword. Those Arabs needed a simpler creed to be preached by a man of their own blood. That man was the prophet Muhammad, a city-dweller, who appealed primarily to the fighting spirit of the Arab.

The birth of Islam came to pass in an atmosphere of bloody battles. Muhammad made but negligible headway while preaching in Mecca. Islam gained real power only after the first battle at Badr, when his companions attacked a caravan of Meccans. Only when Muhammad proved to his followers that rich booty would be their reward for serving Allah's cause, did Islam finally appeal to the sons of the desert. Muhammad had to convince his fellow Arabs at the point of a sword. Historians tell us of instances of battles where early converts killed their own blood-brothers, tore out their livers or hearts and chewed them to get courage and strength for further battles.

It was primarily lust for plunder and raiding that welded the Arab tribes into a fighting companionship. Raiding (*razzia*, *ghazw*) was the main source of livelihood for the Bedouin. His primitive economy in the cruel desert was chiefly based on the camel and palm tree. The camel provided milk, meat, fuel (dung), and shelter (hides), and also served as primary means of transportation. The palm tree was the blessed source of fruits and beverages. To balance that extremely poor economy, the Bedouin had to resort to raiding; small wonder that raiding had become a deeply rooted social necessity which combined both sport and business. As a famous Arab poet put it, "Our business is to make raids on the enemy, on our neighbors, and on our brother, when we find none to raid save a brother."

To those sons of the desert, those wild Ishmaelites, Muhammad carried the gospel of Allah and his own messenger-ship. "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger ('la ilaha illa-Allah wa Muhammad rasul Allah')." This is the simple profession of faith (*shahada*), the first "pillar" of Islam whose mere pronouncement makes one a believer. The other pillars of Islam are: 1. prayer (*salat*); 2. fasting (*sawm*); 3. Alms-giving (*zakat*); 4. pilgrimage (*hajj*); and 5. Holy War (*jihad*). The monotheistic concept of God is indisputably of Hebrew origin. Even the wording of the *Shahada* is but a Biblical phrase. (Deuteronomy, 32, 39; Isaiah, 44, 6; 44, 21; 45, 5; 56, 9; etc.) Prayers preceded by ablutions point to Sabaaen extraction. Fasting and alms are of Hebrew and Sabaaen origin. The fourth pillar, pilgrimage, has its root in pagan practice of stone worshipping of the Ka'aba, the "black stone" of Mecca. Of all the pillars, *jihad* (Holy War) is the most national in Arab character and has proved to be the incentive for perpetuating Islam throughout the centuries. It ought to be borne in mind that the concept of Allah is a sharp retrogression in comparison with the idea of God as presented by the Hebrew prophets and the early Christians. Allah is primarily a "Man of War," that supreme Warrior whom the conquering Hebrews saw smiting their Egyptian enemies.

Islam, or submission to Allah, did not require a profound change of heart; a pagan of the desert did not have to be reborn to accept the new faith. This explains the phenomenon that many tribes abandoned Islam upon Muhammad's death, and had to be kept in line by punitive expeditions of Khalid ibn al-Walid. That which Muhammad promised his followers was plainly stated in the Koran: Paradise for the fighters who survive in battles, and even more tempting enjoyments for those who die

fighting for the cause of Allah. "Let those fight in the way of Allah who sell the life of this world for the other. Whoso fighteth in the way of Allah, be he slain or victorious, on him we shall bestow a vast reward." (Surah IV, 74). This reward is "joys that come from women and offspring, and stored-up heaps of gold and silver and horses branded with their mark, and cattle and land" (Surah III, 14). In the other world, all that the cool gardens will be "given to them in resemblance."

Lust for booty made the hungry Bedouins a fighting community. After Muhammad's death, in 632, this fighting community began its victorious march which carried the glory of Allah to the Bay of Biscay, as well as to the frontiers of China and India. This march toward an Arab Empire was not a planned campaign, or a result of pre-arranged military strategy. The original raids, insignificant in scope, became gigantic in proportion, and as they succeeded beyond any expectation, they ever emboldened the self-made Arab generals to strike again and again, and with more vigor. The Arabs accumulated a strong offensive power under whose blows two ancient Empires crumbled in a relatively short time.

How was it possible that regular armies with age old traditions succumbed to the Bedouins who had not been trained in the kind of warfare that made the Romans and the Persians the masters of ancient military art?

Armies are not machines alone; they usually reflect the culture and spirit of their people and masters. It so happened that at the outset of the Seventh Century both the Byzantine and Persian cultures were in a state of dismal decadency. It was not the spirit of Caesar that drove the armies of Heraclius into battle. Nor was it the dynamic spirit of Darius that rallied the Sasanid army for the defense of Ctesiphon. The Byzantine and Persian emperors of the Seventh Century represented an outworn despotic regime

which turned their people into hapless pariahs. Taxation was extremely heavy, and the people suffered under a religious system that fettered their bodies and souls with a tight-drawn theological noose. Both Eastern Christianity and Persian magism were but deteriorated cults.

The primitive Arabs, full of pristine vigor and inspired with a very simple creed, struck a rotten stem. The Byzantines and Persians, having expanded themselves in ceaseless wars, stood defensive-minded before the onslaught of the Arabs. In all the provinces from Syria, Iraq to Egypt, there was a strong "fifth column" that craved for an opportunity to change their hated masters. In military tactics, too, the Arabs had the advantage: the offensive power, effective mobility, element of surprise, use of weather conditions and high morale defeated the Byzantines and Persians. Since days immemorial, the sons of the desert had been known as offensive warriors; they lived by the sword. The extensive use of cavalry wrought havoc among their adversaries. Camel transport insured excellent mobility. The Arabs attacked suddenly and with great vigor. After the initial attack they would withdraw with the aim of charging again in successive waves. The two fateful battles that shattered the Byzantines and Sasanid empires, that of Yarmuk in 636 and that in 637, were fought in scorching sandstorms. The Arabs apparently felt "at home," having been used to such weather conditions, but for their enemies the weather spelled disaster. The high morale of the Arab warriors, drawn from their absolute submission to Allah and their readiness to die in his Holy War, was reinforced by tangible means. Allah was good to them on earth, too. His soldiers received an ample share of booty in gold, silver, horses, women and all other commodities the Arab could imagine having in Paradise. No wonder that a whole Surah in the Koran is devoted to "Spoils," reminding the warriors of Allah that "bountiful provision" awaits them.

In the thick of constant battles there developed remarkable generalship. Khalid al Walid, the "Sword of Islam," set a splendid example for the others. Amr ibn al As conquered Egypt in 639 and took Alexandria by land. Musa ibn Nussair, one of the greatest Moslem generals, pushed beyond Tripoli into the land of the Berbers. As governor of North Africa, he entrusted Tariq, a Berber neophyte, with the mission of conquering Spain. Tariq, who landed in the Gibraltar (Jabal Tariq) area, defeated the armies of King Roderick and wrested Spain from the hands of the hated Visigoths. In Spain, too, as in the Byzantine and Persian provinces, the conquest was facilitated by the internal strifes of the Visigoth aristocrats and by the hatred of the native population suffering under heavy taxation. It was the Jews, in particular, who welcomed the invaders with open arms, for they had been persecuted ever since 612 as a result of a royal decree that introduced forced baptism.

The victorious march of the Arab armies wore itself out after the defeat between Tours and Poitiers in 732, fifteen years after the Arab thrust had been stalled at the citadel of Constantinople.

With no imperial tradition, with no administrative experience on a broad scale, the desert Arabs found themselves, suddenly, masters of vast territories extending from the Pyrenees to Punjab. And soon they were to learn that Allah had not endowed the conquering Arabs with the ability of building and holding an Empire. As long as Muhammad lived, he was the highest authority who wielded both spiritual and temporal power. He was a *nabi*, a prophet, thence the infallible source of divine law. The prophetic power ceased with his death. But Muhammad was also the indisputable head of the Arab-Moslem State. And it was this temporal authority that his successors fought for.

The question of the caliphate, or the succession to Mu-

hammad as head of the Arab state, split nascent Islam in political-religious parties, evoking stormy repercussions for centuries to come. Of the four orthodox caliphs, three were assassinated. In this period the caliphs were elected from among Muhammad's close companions and early converts. Then Muawiyah, who had opposed Islam in its early stages, and who was a wealthy and worldly Qoraysh, seized the political power of the Arab state and established the dynasty of the Omayyads and made Damascus their capital. Muawiyah, the able governor of Syria, understood that Medina could not serve as a center of an empire. The march of Islam far beyond the "Fertile Crescent" left Medina a provincial town on the fringes of the Arabian desert. The seat of the Empire had naturally to be shifted somewhere into a more cultivated zone of Arab expansion. Damascus, a very ancient city with a cultural, commercial, and industrial background, was destined to become the seat of the Arab Empire. From it roads led southward through Palestine, to Egypt, Maghreb and Spain, as well as westward to Arabia, Iraq, Persia and down to India. The glory of Damascus and the splendor of its caliphs shone over the vast provinces of the *Dar-al-Islam* (Islamic World).

However, the Empire of the Omayyads lasted only 90 years, during which period the authority of the caliph as the temporal head of the State was not seriously challenged. As long as the Arab warriors kept on marching, Damascus was the symbol of a united empire, for its power was based on the success of continuous conquests. The Arabs learned slowly from the Syrians how to administer their provinces, but to rule over remote countries proved difficult. The central authority of the Omayyads encountered stiff opposition from many sides. The governors of the provinces, having tasted the fruits of conquest and power, often regarded themselves as independent rulers; the pious Moslems looked upon the Omayyads as worldly rulers who did not

follow the traditions of the Medina caliphate. The non-Arab elements, who grew ever stronger as they swelled the ranks of the Moslems in the capacity of "clients," were dissatisfied with their inferior status. They fought for more rights and power by founding religious sects. The relatives of Muhammad could not easily forget that it was Muawiyah who "usurped" the caliphate from Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law. All those factors made it possible for the descendants of Al-Abbas, an uncle of the Prophet, to stage a bloody revolt, and in 747 they mercilessly slaughtered all males of the Omayyads. Only one escaped miraculously and founded a dynasty in Spain.

The short-lived Arab Empire came to an end. It was overthrown by its own sons, fellow Arabs who wrested power from the Omayyads with the aid of non-Arab Moslems, but these non-Arab Moslems in turn seized the hegemony in Dar-al-Islam. Damascus was no longer the center of Moslem authority, for the Abbasids moved the capital to Baghdad, still further to the east, and based their government on Persian despotism, becoming gradually puppets of the real rulers, the Persian Buwayhids.

With the fall of the Omayyads, the Arab Empire and Arab hegemony in the Moslem World ceased to exist. Arab nationalism was irrevocably superseded by Islamic universalism. Already after 740, Tunisia and Morocco broke away from the caliphate, and the Omayyads in Spain founded an independent caliphate which split into small city-states. The fact that political power in Islam was wrested from the Arabs after the fall of the Omayyad dynasty is not surprising. The Arab conquerors became a minority in the far flung Islamic world.

The natives of the conquered countries accepted Islam not because of religious convictions, but primarily for economic and political reasons. Islam relieved them from paying tribute, and put them, theoretically at least, into the

society of their masters. To the virile races of central Asia, the militant doctrine of Islam served as a lever for gaining political power. Thus non-Semitic peoples made their appearance in the Moslem world. The Mongols, who later assumed Islam, destroyed the Abbasid Empire and killed the last caliph. A period of confusion followed, out of which the Turks emerged as a dominant Moslem power. The Mamluks, who checked the Tartars, established a dynasty which ruled almost 300 years (1250-1517). The hegemony of the Mamluks was broken by the Ottoman Turks, who succeeded in establishing an Empire which lasted 400 years (1517-1917). Thus from all the Moslem peoples the Turks proved to be the best empire-builders, while the Arabs rank as the poorest.

Although the Arab Empire crumbled in a short period of 90 years, yet its victory was marked decisively in the realm of religion and culture. This cultural victory, however, was a political defeat. Along with the Koran, which became the sacred book of all believers, the Arab script was accepted by non-Semitic peoples, like the Persians and the Turks. The Arab language too had significant bearing on the development of Turkish and Neo-Persian. The Koran and Arab poetry are the only assets of Arab culture of the Omayyad period. It is the genuine Arab culture, for during this period of the Arab Empire nothing else was produced. That which is known as "Arab culture" of the Middle Ages, namely, the civilization of the Abbasid Empire, is not Arab, either in origin or in spirit.

Historians tell us exciting stories of how the Arabs preserved Greek culture in the Dark Ages, and while Europe lived in a cultural dim-out and suffered from scholastic sterility the Arabs were the torch-bearers of progress. A close examination of the culture that flourished under the Abbasids will certainly prove that it was not the Arabs who carried the torches of progress. For all those medieval sci-

ences — whether medicine, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, alchemy, theology and philology — did not spring out of a scientific desire displayed by the Arabs. They felt no need for science.

Those sciences were rather a result of non-Arab quest for learning: it was the Syrians, with their Aramaic heritage, who sought some way to continue their culture; it was the Egyptians, with their Hellenistic civilization, who shared in the Moslem culture; the Persians, the Jews, the Spaniards, who erected that edifice of Moslem culture. For, the Arabs, who came from the desert had nothing to contribute except the Koran, and the pre-Islam poetry that is known as *Mua'llaquat*. Owing to this spiritual drought, Moslem culture had to begin with translations from Syriac, Persian, Greek and Sanscrit. And again, it was not the Arabs who made those translations. Hardly had any epoch in human history known such a factory of translations as that which was established by the caliphs, al-Ma'mun and al-Mutawakkil. The wizard-translator was a Nestorian Christian by the name of Joannitius (Hunain ibn Ishaq). He translated into Arabic the works of Aristotle, Plato, Galen, Hippocrates, as well as the Hebrew Bible. All the philosophical works in Arabic, including those of the famous Ibn Rushd (Averroes) have not produced a new metaphysical system. They did not go beyond interpretation of Greek philosophy in the light of Neo-Platonism.

Astronomy and mathematics in Arabic had a Hindu origin. The "Arabic" numerals and the decimal system came from India. The two famous astronomers al-Khwarizmi and al-Nehavendi were Persians. So was Ali ibn Abbas, the famous physician. The renowned Avicenna (Abdul-Hussain Ibn Sinna) was Persian, too. Al-Kendi, the great philosopher, was a Syrian Jew. Ibn Khaldun, the father of historiography, was of Spanish origin. This list can be continued *ad infinitum*.

Even the founders of Arabic grammar were Persians, only to mention Sibawaihi and Zamakhshari. And the canvas of "Thousand and One Nights" (Arabian Nights) is of Hindu, Persian and Hebrew origin. Those great non-Arab minds who produced those cultural assets wrote in Arabic, of course, for Arabic was the language of the Koran as well as the tongue of the conquerors. Herein lies the cultural victory of the Arab Empire. The converts who lived in the "Fertile Crescent" in Egypt, and beyond, namely, those who were of Semitic origin or mixed races, acquired Arabic as their medium of expression and became Arabicized completely in the course of time. They proved to possess the lowest grade of racial resistance. The others, like the Persians and Turks, although they had acquired the Arabic script and absorbed some elements of Arabic, displayed strong racial and linguistic resistance by retaining their native tongue. The Turks under the guidance of Ataturk went even so far as to discard the Arabic script altogether and to translate the Koran into Turkish.

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There is another piece of fiction which some historians have tried to sell as historic truth. We refer to the so-called "Arab tolerance." The letter and the spirit of the Koran breathe with high-strung intolerance against the infidels who are destined to be "fuel for fire." A horrible fate awaits them, as described in the Koran (Surah IV, 56): "We shall expose them to the Fire. As often as their skins are consumed we shall exchange them for fresh skins that they may taste the torment." The Arabs look upon themselves as the master-race of mankind and regard the Koran as the last and the only true word of divine revelation. Did not Muhammad say to his believers: "You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind"? (Surah III, 110).

At the outset of his prophetic career, Muhammad tried by all means to win the support of the Jews in Medina. Realizing that the Jews in Yathrib (Medina) constituted the most powerful and influential part of the Medinese, Muhammad was certain that with their aid he could break the hegemony of Mecca. But the Jews did not feel inclined to meddle in Arab politics. And although the concept of Muhammad's Allah was almost identical with that of conquering Hebraism of the Moses-Joshua period, the Jews of Medina would not recognize Muhammad as a prophet. They ridiculed him on the assumption that the epoch of the Prophets had come to a close a long time ago. This ridicule prompted Muhammad to eliminate some Jewish rites that Islam had acquired originally, and served as the prime cause of teaching the Jews a lesson in "tolerance." When he felt strong enough with the rising power of Islam, he slaughtered in cold blood all Jewish inhabitants of Medina, at the same time razing their dwellings and cutting down the precious palm orchards of some other Jewish tribes.

Muhammad accused the Jews and the Christians, the "people of the Scripture," of having distorted and corrupted the word of God. But being monotheists, he could not put them on the same level with the pagans, and besides, in the course of Arab history they proved a source of sizable income. Hence the idea of "*dhimmis*," or protégés. Already in 631, Muhammad took under his "protection" the Jewish tribes of the oases, Adhrub and Jarba, as well as the Christians of al-Aqaba; for sparing their lives these *dhimmis* had to pay tribute (*jizya*) in a "state of humiliation," or as the Koran put it, "being brought low." This precedent laid down by the prophet was the basis for later legislation concerning "protégés." A *dhimmi* was outside the pale of the Arab master-race, and in the eyes of all Moslems, he was surely an inferior creature. He was

entirely thrown at the mercy of his masters. For according to Moslem laws, then and now, he must not dress like a Moslem, must not ride on horseback, nor may he carry weapons. His house must always be open to the Moslem, and his property may be confiscated for the *wagf*. A *dhimmi's* testimony in courts is not accepted. He may not build new churches, and his worship must be so humble and noiseless as not to offend the Moslem.

Caliph Omar II, a very fanatic Moslem, could be regarded the precursor of the Aryan paragraph and the Nuremberg laws. He ordered the Jews and Christians to wear a "distinctive dress" and forbade them holding any public office. The "yellow badge," which wrote infamous chapters in human history both in the Middle Ages and in the Hitler-era, is an Arab invention too. It was the Caliph al-Mutawakkil who decreed in 850 that Jews and Christians wear a yellow topgarb; their slaves — two yellow patches, one sewed on the back, the other in the front. The Arabs called that yellow patch euphemistically "honey-color" and the dhimmis were mocked as "spotted." But "*pecunia non olet*." Those dhimmis having been reduced to political and social pariahs, proved a milch-cow for the Moslem State.

This is "Arab tolerance," whose scourge has been felt throughout the ages ever since the Medina massacres. The spirit of that "tolerance" marked bloody trails down to the 19th and 20th Centuries. Witness the massacres of Christians in Lebanon in 1841 and 1845, as well as the horrible slaughter in 1860 which prompted French intervention; permanent pogroms on the Jews in the Yaman, Algeria and Morocco. Instances of Arab violence after World War I include extermination of the Christian Assyrians in Iraq; waves of Arab terror against the Jews in Palestine in 1921, 1929, and 1936; and finally, massacres of Jews in Baghdad during Rashid Ali al-Ghailani's revolt in 1941, as well as the violent riots of 1945 in which several

hundred Jews were slain in the streets of Cairo and Tripolitania.

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“Arabia Deserta” has produced Islam as the most intolerant of the three monotheistic faiths. The lofty ideals of the Hebrew prophets of absolute justice and permanent peace, and the early Christian ideal of “brotherly love” must have been strange to the fighting Arabs and to Allah who was a “man of war.” Islam sanctified the sword, and the sword sanctified Islam in the course of history.

On the other hand, the centers of Islamic culture moved ever further from the Peninsula. Islamic theology was built far from the cradle of Islam. Mecca and Medina, the most sacred shrines of Islam, became mere places of pilgrimages for Moslems the world over, but as a political and cultural center, Arabia had already ceased to exist with the founding of the Omayyad dynasty in Damascus. Arab unity on the Peninsula disintegrated rapidly; permanent religious strifes and tribe-warfare turned the clock back to the pre-Islam era. Islam, which scratched but the surface of the Bedouin, has not changed his character. Some tribes even returned to heathen practices. In the 18th Century, the Peninsula was the most intolerant and forbidden province of the Ottoman Empire, a turbulent province which the Turks found hard to control.

Raiding continued to flourish just as in the days before Muhammad, and the sword retained its glory as the supreme criterion of social justice. As long as this sword was swinging within the confines of the Peninsula, the Bedouin furnished exciting material for romantic literature, but the outer world did not take notice of Arab affairs. However, there came a time when the desert began to stir again, and a new Arab force swept over the borders of the Peninsula.

2

The Desert Strikes Again

The new force, Wahhabism, that stirred the Arab Peninsula on the threshold of the 19th Century was but a feeble echo in comparison with the dynamic force that had given impetus to Islam twelve centuries earlier. But in character and essence, the Wahhabi movement, with its militant religious and national zeal, resembles the primitive Islam in the days of its creator. Muhammad surely did not dream of a world-empire, or of a universal religion for all mankind. The chapters of the Koran bear witness to the fact that his primary aim was to bring the light of Allah to his fellow-Arabs and unite them in one brotherhood, rich and poor alike. His religious outlook was chiefly of a political and national character, inasmuch as it was focused around the doctrine of a state, a national state, whose purpose was to unite all Arab cities and tribes. This political-religious concept of Islam had been preserved during the Omayyad period, while dynamic Islam was yet far from a theological system. Under the influence of foreign elements, Moslem theology came into being. In the course of centuries, Islam acquired not only a philosophical-speculative character which was alien to the true Semitic spirit, but was also infected with mysticism and Saint worship, particularly in India and North Africa. Numerous shrines and tombs of saints had become centers of pagan practices, where miracle performers and swindlers-at-large preyed on the naiveness of the believers.

A tendency to preserve the original faith of Muhammad in its purity had resulted in the first religious split as early

as during the reign of the fourth orthodox caliph Ali (656-661, A.D.), as a group of believers known as Khawarij (dissenters) disavowed the caliph for his acquiescence to submit to arbitration his quarrel with his rival Muawiyah concerning the caliphate. The very idea of arbitration seemed to them a breach of faith, for they devoutly adhered to the letter of the Koran, refusing to accept any interpretations not authorized by Muhammad, or by the caliphs Abu Bakr, Omar and Othman. Those Khawarij, with their extreme preclusion of any other source of divine law save the Koran, may be regarded as the progenitors of the Wahhabi movement. But this is not the only point of similarity between those two movements. The extreme fanaticism of the Khawarij, who would brand their opposing co-religionists as "infidels" to be purged and purified by the sword, very strikingly recalls the fanatic zeal of the Wahhabis, for they too endeavored to revive Islam in its primitive form, and turn it into a militant force for the sake of Arab unity. Not since the Tenth Century, when the Carmathian movement* fell asunder in the Arab homeland, until the end of the Eighteenth Century, did the Arabian Peninsula come into the limelight of history.

It was Muhammad ibn Abdu-l-Wahhab, born in 1703 at Ayana, Najd, whose teachings are responsible for the revival of Arab Islam in the Eighteenth Century. From Ibn Taimiya, a Hanbali jurist of the Fourteenth Century, Muhammad ibn Abdu-l-Wahhab derived his outlook on Islam. Heathen practices of his fellow Arabs, as well as foreign innovations introduced into Islam by non-Arab elements, prompted him to preach against what he called "idolatry." Already his teachers in Medina discovered in him a "heretic" mind because of his insistence upon simplicity and rigor in practicing Islam.

* Communistic upheaval under the leadership of Hamdan Carmath. The armies of this sect captured Mecca in 930, carrying away the "black stone." It was returned 22 years later.

Not only did Muhammad denounce philosophical speculations, clinging blindly to the letter of the Koran, but in his Semitic primitivism he decried as heresies all glitter, ornaments and mystic practices. Thus, according to the Wahhab creed, it is a grave sin to wear silk garments or gold ornaments. A much graver sin is illumination of shrines or worshipping the dead. The highly decorative minarets on the mosques are to be razed from the Arab House of Worship. Wine drinking, prohibited by the Prophet, is surely an unpardonable transgression. Even smoking is forbidden; as are laughter, music and songs. The five prayers a day are to be observed strictly. And as Allah had sanctified the sword of Muhammad of Mecca to purge the disbelievers, so had Muhammad of Ayana sanctified the same sword to swing again for the sake of a revived and puritanic Islam.

This militant plan appealed very strongly to the rulers of Najd, that is to Abdu-l-Aziz ibn Sa'ud and his son, Sa'ud. Inspired by the teachings of Muhammad ibn Abdu-l-Wahhab, a fighting brotherhood was formed with the aim of spreading the new creed by the might of the Sa'uds right arm. In 1799 a raiding army of the Wahhabis invaded Iraq. Imbued with a desire to strike at the heart of the hated *Shi'ya*,* it captured the holy city of Kerbela, mercilessly slaughtered its inhabitants and utterly devastated its shrines. The same fate befell Mecca and Medina, where all ornaments on the tomb of the Prophet and the mosques were razed. The march of the Wahhabi-warriors aroused strong national sentiment on the Peninsula. The sword of Islam again united the quarreling tribes and the diverse provinces of Arabia. Wahhabi rule spread over Hejaz, the Yaman Al-Hassa, Oman and even reached the Bahrain-Islands.

The growing might of this new and dynamic movement caused widespread alarm among the Turks. They were

* See page 64.

unable to check the advance of the Wahhabis, who were threatening Damascus, Aleppo and Baghdad. The Sultan-caliph, Keeper of the two Holy Cities and head of the Dar-al-Islam, was extremely perturbed over the havoc wrought on Mecca and Medina, and so were the Moslems the world over. His soldiers suffered dismal defeat at the hands of the "heretics." His supremacy was seriously challenged.

In this dire situation, the Sultan called upon Mehemed Ali, governor of Egypt to crush the rebellion of the Arabs. Mehemed Ali, of Albanian ancestry, dispatched a well equipped army to Hejaz, and thus in 1811 a hard campaign started which lasted seven years. It was Ibrahim Pasha, Mehemed Ali's son, who shattered the might of the Wahhabis; he struck with force at Najd, captured and destroyed Dar'iyah. Having concluded his campaign successfully, thanks to superior arms of European origin, he stationed garrisons in all important cities of Arabia. The proud Ibn Sa'ud was carried away in chains to Constantinople, where he was ordered by the Sultan to be executed, his body hanged on the gallows as a wierd memento to all rebels.

Thus this new chapter of Arab awakening came to a bloody conclusion. Arab unity within the Peninsula, brought about by the fighting Wahhabis, disintegrated rapidly. For nothing but might impresses the primitive mind of the Arab. But since the might of the Wahhabis had turned into ashes, the different tribes of Arabia again were happy to roam, without being subjected to a central authority. The Egyptian garrisons withdrew gradually from the Najd, whereupon Ibn Sa'ud's descendants succeeded in establishing a tiny state with Riad as capital. However, this state was of small importance and could not grow, because to the north in Jabal Shammar there entrenched himself one Abdullah Ibn Rashid who, having se-

cured the full backing of Constantinople, served as a constant check upon the House of Sa'ud. Besides, inner strifes among the defeated Sa'udis contributed to the further decay of the once mighty Wahhabis. But in the ashes of the Wahhabi Empire there flickered some sparks of a new fire. For the military defeat of the Sa'uds, however painful and humiliating, could not extinguish the renewed creed that refused to die. Was a Phoenix to rise from those ashes? The Turks did not think so, for militarily the Sa'uds had been conquered.

To the Arabs, as well as to the unbiased observer, Wahhabism was unquestionably a religious-national awakening of the Peninsula, a genuine movement generated from within, with no foreign influence. Modern nationalism had nothing to do with it, for the Wahhabis created a theocratic state with the Shari'a, the canonic law, as its only legal fundament. Owing to this religious spirit, European secularism has not penetrated the heart of the Peninsula to this very day.

But Wahhabism had not been confined to the limits of the Peninsula. It had evoked spiritual repercussions far beyond the Arab World. Its zeal for a purified Islam as well as its hatred of foreign ideas, fired some devout Moslems to follow the Wahhabi example in their homelands. Those believers drew their inspiration from a direct contact with the Wahhabis while arriving as pilgrims at Mecca. It was Othman Dan Fodio from the Fula tribes in Sudan who united many tribes under the green banner and established a Kingdom with Sokoto as its capital.

Sayid Ahmad and Ismail Hajji Muhammad, two Moslems from India, transplanted the Wahhabi ideas into their homeland, inspiring their fellow-Moslems to eliminate the Hindu-rites from their creed. They also preached jihad against the Sikhs. The Wahhabis of India succeeded even in establishing a state in Punjab which fell under the

blows of the Sikhs in 1831. Wahhabi ideas penetrated as far as Sumatra; and the Senussi movement in Tripoli, too, owes its origin to the Wahhabis, for Muhammad ibn Ali ibn as-Senussi, during his pilgrimage to Mecca, fell under the spell of the Wahhabi zealots and their austere teachings. Wherever Wahhabi ideas got a firm hold on Moslems, religious-national feelings surged up and led to an armed clash with foreign oppressors or quasi-oppressors.

Wahhabism in itself, however, was a product of the desert, and being devoid of cultural stamina of the sown, did not arouse any national feelings among the Arabs outside the Peninsula. Perhaps their heretic outlook upon Islam, as well as their complete lack of progressive ideas, estranged all those Arabs who were orthodox Sunni. Needless to say, the massacres perpetrated by the Sa'uds in Iraq, and the destruction of Kerbela, evoked unforgettable hatred among the Shi'ya inhabitants of Iraq. To the Turks and Egyptians the Wahhabi adventure was but a shameful rebellion of uncivilized Bedouin-bands.

But this rebellion was also an unmistakable sign that something was rotten in the Moslem World. For one thing, it bore witness to the military decline of the Ottoman Empire. Secondly, Moslems took up arms against Moslems, which fact in itself was nothing new, for Arab and Moslem history is full of such instances. But the corpse of an Arab leader that hung on the gallows in Constantinople spelled ominous foreboding. After all, Sa'ud fought for the glory of Allah and in behalf of the Koran; secondly, he was a "pure-blooded" Arab. Thus the rift between Turks and Arabs was ever widening, leading to an inevitable break in 1917. This break, however, was only one crack in the Moslem structure which had begun tottering a long time before. We may recall that the Sultan had summoned Mehemed Ali to fight Napoleon's invasion of Egypt. Mehemed Ali had suffered defeat at the hands of a Christian

Emperor, but by virtue of crushing his fellow Moslems he became governor of Egypt and founded a dynasty there against the will of his Sultan-caliph.

Thus, the Wahhabi upheaval, which happened to take place in the Napoleonic Era, coincides with one of the most decisive chapters in world events, a chapter that marked the beginning of the downfall of the Ottoman Empire and shaped a new destiny for the Arab World.

3

Western Hegemony a Fact

The world struggle between the Moslem Orient and the Christian Occident, which brought swarms of Crusaders to Syria and Palestine, ended with a decisive victory for the Moslems. It was the Turks who for many centuries had fought the battles of Allah against the "infidels." They wiped out the temporary gains of the Crusaders in Syria and Palestine. They also laid in ruins the last bastions of Eastern Christianity in Asia Minor. The Fifteenth Century, which marks the final decline of Moslem power in Spain, brought, however, the victorious Crescent to the gates of South-Eastern Europe. With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Turks had secured a valuable springboard for their future thrusts into the Balkans and beyond. The Crescent, which had been driven out by the Cross from the European foothold on the Iberian Peninsula, again invaded the European continent through the Balkan backdoor. When the banner of the Prophet carried the Turkish warriors as far as to the suburbs of Vienna in the Seventeenth Century, Moslem glory reached its pinnacle. But the setback suffered by the Turks at the very gates of Vienna marks the beginning of a process which not only brought about a complete ouster of Moslem domination in the Balkans, but also caused a slow but sure crumbling of the Ottoman Empire altogether. This process was a clear sign of the political, cultural and technological renaissance of the West.

While the Turks were intoxicated with their successful military campaigns in South-Eastern Europe, the far fringes

of the Moslem World on the African coast were subjected to incipient pressure of Western penetration. Traders led the vanguard of the invaders. With the discovery of the sea-route to India via the Cape of Good Hope, the trade monopoly of the Moslem East was irrevocably broken, and thus the economic prosperity of the Moslem East, which was a result of continuous conquests, came to an end. This was the first in a series of blows dealt by the European West to the Moslem East, the first, but the most mortal.

Alongside with commercial penetration, there appeared the first signs of military thrusts against the Moslem and Arab World. As early as at the outset of the Sixteenth Century, the Spaniards, who had been the first Europeans to liberate themselves from the Arab yoke, were also the first to strike at the Arab invaders who had landed on Spanish soil, eight centuries before. In 1510 Spanish troops invaded the Barbary state of Tripolitania. Although the Spanish, and later Maltese rule, did not endure even a half century in Tripolitania, this first thrust of the European West into the African coastline of the Mediterranean pointed the way of the future inroad of the West into the Arab World through the Hamitic peripheries. Charles V, Roman Emperor and King of Spain, followed his predecessors with expeditions to Tunis in 1535, expeditions that were aimed at the liberation of Christian slaves. Algeria was the next target of this great monarch, and although this thrust in 1541 had a disastrous ending, the route of the invasion was opened for more successful attempts to come.

The Portuguese too, acquired a foothold on the African coast, and the Spanish Empire in the Seventeenth Century extended its rule over the Moroccan coastland. But it was the French who were destined to become the real conquerors of North Africa. The French conquest however, did not begin with landing troops. Its inception was an innocent infiltration by peaceful merchants. The "Con-

cessions d'Afrique" founded in Algiers, slowly and systematically brought Algiers under the economic control of the French. This commercial company also developed routes of trade along the African coastland to Egypt and Syria, and thus extended for the French their future zone of influence.

Napoleon's invasion of Egypt was undoubtedly the turning point in the modern history of the whole Moslem World, for it inaugurated the march of Western hegemony that was destined to become firmly established in the East. It was not religious hegemony, of course. For Napoleon's armies marched under a banner that represented a new political idea based upon national rebirth. The tottering of the Ottoman Empire was augured by the fact that the Sultan-caliph was no longer able to defend his believers against an "infidel" invader. The superiority of European military technique, as displayed in the battle of the Pyramids, became unchallenged. In a military sense, the Moslem World was doomed. The rapid development of technology in the West placed the outworn and dormant East in a helpless situation. The very fact that the head of the Great Moslem Empire was compelled to call upon an Albanian officer for help against the French was in itself a voice of doom. The forces of Mehemed Ali proved no match for the modern equipped French, but this defeat of the Moslems was the beginning of a new era for the Egyptians after the French withdrew in 1803.

The authority of the Sultan-caliph, challenged by the rebellion of the Wahhabis, was doubly shattered by Mehemed Ali himself. It was no crime to fight the Moslems of the desert, why then would it be an offense to fight the Turkish forces of the Sultan? Religious scruples in political calculations were no longer a factor which troubled Moslem minds. Therefore, Mehemed Ali did not shun the opportunity of getting advice from the infidel Europeans

against his caliph. With their help he learned to administer Egypt, equip a modern army, and even build a navy. Being a bold conqueror, he eagerly fought battles, but not for the Sultan: he dreamed of an empire of his own with Egypt as its core, an empire which would include the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire.

After the conquest of the Sudan he occupied Crete (1822) and landed in Athens (1827). But, again, his fleet was no match for the British; it was utterly destroyed at Navarino. The "infidels" proved a hard nut to crack; so he made his troops march against his master, the Sultan. After all, it was the Sultan who refused to give him Syria as a gift for the battles he had fought for the cause of Allah. Under the command of Ibrahim, Mehemed Ali's son, the Egyptian troops conquered Syria, and in 1832 they marched toward Constantinople. But this time the "infidel" British and Russians intervened to save the caliph from imminent disaster. They saw in Mehemed Ali's rise a serious threat to their interests, and so under their pressure Ibrahim withdrew from Syria after the Sultan had recognized Mehemed Ali as governor of Egypt with formal allegiance to Constantinople. Thus an ambitious dream of a Pan-Arab Empire under non-Arab leadership came to an unhappy ending.

Napoleon's invasion of Egypt occasioned the first crack in the Ottoman Empire. The actual loss of strategic Egypt shook the whole structure of the Moslem World and marked the inception of a breaking-up-process of the other provinces. The French, having failed in the conquest of Egypt, returned to their initial encroachment upon the Algerian coast. This time it took the form of an actual military occupation of Algiers in 1830, to be followed by systematic expeditions into the interior. Thus the French entrenched themselves militarily on the North African Coast, which subsequently became their sphere of influence.

The same procedure of economic infiltration to be followed by military occupation was likewise applied to Tunisia. The "Compagnie d'Afrique," which operated there, brought about a short period of prosperity, but Tunisia was soon to experience bitter times of depression because of epidemics, poor crops and inefficient administration. This was the cause of dispatching an International Commission to study the situation. This Commission, of course, was rather French than international, and so Tunisia came under ever tighter control of the French. Furthermore, raids of Tunisian tribes in Algeria gave the French a good pretext for invading Tunisia. In 1881 French troops occupied Tunisia, which was declared a protectorate, for officially the ruler, or the Bey, was fully recognized by the French.

While French penetration was aiming at the furthest peripheries of the Arab World, the English were coming into contact with the Arab countries that lay ever closer to the Arab homeland. British penetration since the opening of the Suez Canal was dictated primarily by a desire of securing their life-line through the Mediterranean to India.

In 1839 the British occupied Aden; in 1857 they seized Bab-al-Mandab and the island of Perin. Extensive use of gold pieces, passed lavishly to the Arab Sheikhs of Hadhramaut, further buttressed British positions on the Arabian Seaboard. True, their main goal of seizing Egypt was not yet achieved. But internal Egyptian affairs played well into their hands. Khedive Ismail, having contracted substantial debts for running his country, was obliged to sell his shares (Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez) to the British government. Disraeli, thanks to whom this farseeing transaction came to pass, surely shaped thereby British imperialistic policy for centuries to come.

The example of Tunis was followed in Egypt, too. A financial commission came to Egypt to settle the economic muddle. Foreign encroachment was too evident everywhere. Trouble was unavoidable. Arabi Pasha, an ardent Egyptian, led a rebellion of the fellaheen against the Khedive and the foreigners. European residents of Egypt were massacred by the rebels. This prompted the English fleet to shell Alexandria and land troops that occupied Egypt in 1882. The Khedive, of course, remained the nominal ruler of the country, and even his allegiance to the Sultan of Constantinople was not abrogated. Once well entrenched in Egypt, the British extended their rule further to the South. By his successful expeditions, Lord Kitchener not only quelled the armed rebellion of the Mahdi, but also checked the French at Fashoda, and thus secured Sudan for the British and drew a demarcation line between British and French zones of influence in Africa. This rivalry of the two European powers for the possession of Egypt, which finally fell to the British, is also responsible for the last act of the Moroccan drama which came to a close at the outset of the Twentieth Century.

Berberic Morocco, despite its notorious hatred of foreigners, could not resist the strong pressure of the European powers, either. The Sultans of Morocco had concluded numerous agreements in the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, whereby European powers were granted the right to anchor ships in Moroccan ports. Such agreements with Spain, France, Sweden, Denmark and England provided a source of considerable income for the Sultans. European traders set their feet on Moroccan soil and the process of slow infiltration began there, as it did in the neighboring countries. After 1880 Europeans were even permitted to buy land in Morocco. And after the clash at Fashoda, when the English promised the French not to interfere in Mor-

occo, the final chapter of the North African penetration came to a close. Casablanca was occupied by French troops in 1907, and in 1912 the Sultan agreed to a French protectorate. The French, however, respected Spanish rights to the northern part of Morocco. Tangier became internationalized by a mutual agreement among England, France and Spain. In the second decade of the Twentieth Century the French gained indisputable domination over all North African countries, penetrating the most forbidden nooks of Morocco, where bellicose tribes kept French troops on constant guard.

But the colonial appetite of the French was far from being satiated with the conquest of North Africa. As early as 1860 the French penetrated Syria, a land which was much closer to the Arab core than any other of the African provinces. The massacres of Christians in Damascus brought French troops into Syria, an action which greatly undermined the prestige of the Sultan, inasmuch as he was compelled to grant autonomy to Christian Lebanon and also to recognize French protection of all Christians in Syria. French intervention in Syria, which was followed up by extensive religious, cultural and educational propaganda, not only dealt a severe blow to the Sublime Porte but also provided the most decisive stimulus for Syrian nationalism.

Coinciding with French penetration into Syria, there began infiltrating into Palestine the first groups of Jewish settlers imbued with the Zionist idea to rebuild the devastated land of their ancestors. The modern Jewish settlements in Palestine amidst a desolated landscape were perhaps the most harmless and civilized form of Western penetration performed by people whose Eastern traditions were still alive in their souls.

The French and the British, who constituted the two major powers to dominate the greater part of the Moslem World, were not the only pretenders to the heritage of

the "Sick man" of Europe. United Italy, too, sought a place in the African sun. With Algeria and Morocco in French hold, and with Egypt under British control, the yet "free" and quite logical spot for Italian expansion remained Libya. This was the only possession left to the Sultan; and lying just across Sicily, it naturally attracted a great many poor Italians who migrated there and founded numerous colonies. The inevitable crisis came in 1911 when Italy declared war on Turkey, and although Enver Pasha resisted fiercely Italian invasions of Libya, the fate of this province was sealed after the Italian fleet had occupied the Dodecanese Islands and shelled Constantinople. Confronted with the Balkan War, Abdul-Hamid had no other choice but to grant "autonomy" to Libya, namely to turn over to the "infidel" Italians this African possession, except for Cyrenaica.

This division of Eastern spoils among the European powers could not but arouse envy within imperial Germany, where the microbe of grandiosity, injected by Bismarck into German brains, matured quickly with the ever aggressive policies of Wilhelm II. It was von Moltke who thought that Anatolia, rich in resources, but undeveloped, was an attractive morsel for the industrialist Germans. The shattering blows that the Empire of Abdul-Hamid had sustained from the French and the British made him look toward Germany as the only Power capable of checking the further dismemberment of his Empire. Germany's "Drang nach Osten" was welcomed by the Turks, who being menaced by the French and the British, also feared the Russians who strongly coveted the Dardanelles.

Already in 1885, a German military mission under Colonel von Goltz arrived in Constantinople with the aim of modernizing the Turkish army. Military Academies established by the Germans contributed a great deal to the fighting efficiency of the Turks, but could not prevent the final

downfall of an outworn Empire. Likewise, the Baghdad-railway plan was of no avail, although its political-strategic implication aimed at shaking the British hegemony as well as at controlling the Arab provinces. Upon his visit to Constantinople in 1898, Kaiser Wilhelm II obtained the concession to build the Baghdad Railway which was to run from Konia through Mossul to Baghdad and Basra with the terminus at Kuwait.

World War I interrupted the work, and not until 1940 was the line from Baghdad to Basra completed by the Iraq government. But the line never reached Kuwait, for the British intervened in time. The Hejaz Railway, on the other hand, which was to run from Damascus to Medina, did see completion in 1908, and although it had been constructed with the sole purpose of serving the pilgrims to Mecca, it was, nevertheless, a piece of Ottoman strategy to exert control over the ever rebellious Bedouins of Arabia. The German engineers who laid tangible rails for the "Drang nach Osten" were certainly looked upon by the British as harbingers of serious threats to their interests in the Near East. When German and British interests clashed in Iraq over the Berlin-Baghdad line, Germany was destined to be the loser. The "triumphal" tours of Kaiser Wilhelm II to Jerusalem and Damascus did not help much to make his "Drang nach Osten" a reality. Also in the political rush for Morocco, the Kaiser paid a bombastic visit to Tangier (1905), and after the occupation of Fez by the French he dispatched the gunboat Panther to Agadir, but both seizures were of no avail in the face of a united Anglo-French front.

On the eve of World War I we find the majority of Moslems under British and French rule. The Occident had definitely subdued the Orient. The least Arabicized countries on the far fringes of the Arab World, like Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, were under actual domination of

“infidels”; Egypt enjoyed a status of mild protectorate, while Syria and Iraq were already dented by foreign jabbing. Arabia alone, except for a few bases on the southern seaboard and on the Persian Gulf, was the only Arab country free from Christian encroachment.

Had the Moslem World accepted that accomplished fact of Western hegemony peacefully? Had it completely lost its power of resistance?

4

The Phantom of Pan-Islam

Moslems the world over viewed with great apprehension the victorious march of the West. But they were helpless in the face of powerful and superior enemies. Politically the Dar-al-Islam (Islamic World) was over. Lack of geographical cohesion, multiplicity of races and nations, as well as historical disunity among the Moslems, made defense impossible. Gone were the days when a religious idea alone could hold together an empire. Alongside the march of the West, came the idea of nationalism, which had long ago defeated the idea of the religious state. This political reality slowly penetrated the Moslem countries that for centuries had been living under an unchanged religious system.

The Ottoman Empire was the only political power which could turn Islam into a powerful weapon against the onslaught of the West. Aware of this fact, Abdul-Hamid had desperately tried to hold back the inevitable disintegration of his religious state. As the supreme-defender of Islam, he aimed at arousing Moslem sentiments everywhere. And such Pan-Islamic symptoms were discernible in various parts of the Moslem World. Sporadic outbreaks against European penetration, like those of Abdul-Kadr in Algeria, of ShamyI in the Caucasus, and of the Mahdi in Sudan, aroused some Pan-Islamic sentiments, but failed to inspire a political world movement, or to coordinate effort to fight against the West.

It was Jamel-ad-Din-al-Afghani (1838-1897) who dreamed of turning those all-Moslem sparks into a flame that would melt the sword of the "infidels." He con-

ceived the idea of Pan-Islam. To him Islam was primarily a political concept. Historically he was right, of course, but the impact of circumstances made him fight a lost cause.

Witnessing the ever-increasing encroachment of the West upon the Dar-al-Islam, he saw in the Christian offensive a political monster whose aim was to devour the heritage of the Prophet. Although he was well aware of the internal strifes among the Western powers, he could but warn his co-religionists against the common aspirations of Christianity. At the bottom, he argued, the Christian World is still imbued with the crusading spirit against Islam; under the cloak of "progress" the Christians are aiming at the destruction of Islam, accusing the Moslem states of backwardness and fanaticism. In the name of this progress, which he called just a new term for crusading, the Western Powers are trying by all methods, both peaceful and war-like, to break the political backbone of Islam. Consequently, there is but one way of fighting against this menace: all Moslem nations must unite in waging a defensive war against Christian aggression. But in this crucial struggle one thing need not be forgotten: the aggressive West must be met and combated by its own methods and technique. This diagnosis of Jamel-ad-Din-al-Afghani made sense, no doubt. But the hopeless disunity of the Moslem peoples and their inferiority in military technique as well as their outworn methods in administration, inevitably shelved the great idea of Al-Afghani as a myth.

However, Abdul Hamid embarked upon the Pan-Islamic boat in the hope of pulling together the tottering provinces of his Empire, and of marshaling all Moslems to prevent further aggression of the European Powers. Jamel-ad-Din-al-Afghani, who arrived in Constantinople in 1882, made a deep impression upon the Sultan. Fired with the Pan-Islamic idea, Abdul-Hamid dispatched emissaries all over the Moslem World to rally all believers behind their caliph.

The Moslems in India responded favorably, for they were desperately looking for some aid amidst an overwhelming majority of hostile Hindus. The Turkish Sultan was invoked at the *Khutbah** as the caliph of all believers. But even among the orthodox Arabs, Shiites, and Senussi, the call for Pan-Islam evoked some propitious response, although theoretically they could not recognize Abdul-Hamid as caliph. The majority of the Arabs, who cling to the traditional view that only an Arab from the house of Qoraysh is entitled to bear the caliphate, resented the fact that a non-Arab Moslem had styled himself caliph. The Shiites on the other hand, in principle do not recognize the institution of the caliphate, for their spiritual head is the *Imam*, who must be a descendant of Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law. The Senussi believe in a Mahdi, a Messiah.

This question of the caliphate, more than any other problem in Moslem theology, has given rise to such ample piles of controversial literature that it is quite difficult to arrive at any final conclusions in this matter. There are, however, several aspects of the caliphate problem which seem clear in the light of history. The title "caliph" (*Khalifah*), assumed by the heads of the Moslem state after the death of Muhammad, connoted "successor." This succession referred only to the temporal power of the caliph, but did not imply any spiritual leadership, for the interpretation of the Koran and the traditions belonged to the *Ulema*, doctors of the Law.

The assumption by the Omayyads of the title of "Amir al Mu'minin" suggests that the caliph was primarily the defender of the faith, obliged to defend the believers against external and internal foes. But never had the caliph had the power of dogma, as the Pope has, for there is no priesthood in Islam.

* Prayer and sermon read in the mosque on Fridays.

The caliphate had been a political institution as long as the Omayyads wielded supreme power over their Empire. After the Buwayhids seized the political reins under the Abbasids, the caliph became a puppet, a shadow whose only justification of existence seemed to lie in sanctioning the authority of non-Arab rulers. After 1258, when the Mongols killed the last Abbasid caliph, Musta'sim, the Moslem world was without a caliph for a short period. In 1261 the Mamluk Sultan, Beybers, installed Mustansir, an uncle of Mustasim as caliph in Cairo. But again the caliph was mere shadow, not substance.

That the institution of the caliphate had lost its historical significance, is proved by the fact that many Moslem rulers had styled themselves caliphs. Some of the Hafsid dynasty in Tunis, the Marimid dynasty in Morocco, the Sultans of the Turkomans of the White Sheep, the Mughals of India and many others assumed the title of caliph. The assumption of the caliphate by non-Arab rulers ceased to be shocking to millions of pious Moslems; it found jurists and historians who, like Hafiz-Abru, for instance, took pains to find allusions in the Koran which could justify a non-Arab caliphate. The sultans of the Ottoman dynasty, having broken Mamluk rule, would not even tolerate the puppet-caliph.

It was Sultan Salim who made the last shadowy caliph Mutawakkil "transfer" his title to the house of the Ottoman rulers. Whether the story of his transfer is true or not, whether Salim did receive from Mutawakkil the Mantle of the Prophet, some hairs of his beard and the sword of Omar — those particulars are of secondary importance. There remains the fact that the Ottoman Sultans called themselves caliphs and were addressed as such by foreign rulers. Thus in the treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji the Sultan is recognized as "sovereign Caliph of the Mohammedan

religion" with the unalienable right to protect the interests of all Moslems.

And as such, as *defender* of the faith, Abdul-Hamid appealed to his co-religionists to fight the infidels. His call, though heeded in the far corners of Islam, did not bring tangible results, for as a political idea Pan-Islam proved to be but a myth. And as such it was destined to hover for many decades without arousing anything but sentiments. All-Islam congresses had been convened from time to time with the same result: political failure. The Salonika Congress, for instance, adopted in 1911 a resolution that representatives of all Moslem countries meet annually in Constantinople, but this resolution like many others, never saw realization.

About the same time Moslem authorities from both the Sunni and the Shiya met in Najf to bridge the age-old rift between the two sects, but politically this meeting had no bearing on the strengthening of Pan-Islam. The complete bankruptcy of Pan-Islam as a political factor was clearly evident after the outbreak of World War I, when Sultan Muhammad V on November 11, 1914 proclaimed "Holy War" (jihad) after receiving the legal opinion (fatwa) of the Sheikh-al-Islam. This proclamation was certain to fail miserably, for the Sultan having allied himself to the equally "infidel" Germans, *a priori* doomed his jihad-call. The result was evident; Moslems took up arms against Moslems. Moslems from India fought under "infidel" British against their fellow-believers in Iraq and elsewhere. Arabs fought against Turks, as well as against their fellow Arabs.

Notwithstanding the fact that some writers had depicted Pan-Islam with the most frightful features, Pan-Islam proved to be but a harmless phantom. However, being a phantom, it had not ceased to make itself noticeable to this

very day. The abolition of the caliphate, by the Turkish Assembly in 1924, gave rise to a new upsurge of Pan-Islam feelings. The "Central Caliphate Committee" met in Bombay, but no concrete decision was taken. This committee merely expressed the wish to have a head of Islam; but to bring about the realization of this wish, it was necessary to call a Congress where representatives of all Moslem countries would participate. This was a difficult job for the disunited Moslems.

After two years of discussions and negotiations two separate Congresses were held, one in Cairo (1926) and the other in Mecca. The Congress held in Cairo, and sponsored by the *Ulema* of the al-Azhar university, decided that in principle the revival of the caliphate would be possible, but that the appointment of a caliph is a matter of concern to all Moslem countries. This congress was poorly attended, and the largest community in the world, that of India, did not participate. The Mecca Congress, which was supposed to be of decisive importance, turned out to be a disgrace to most Moslems. Persia and Iraq did not participate at all. Turkey, the Yaman, Afghanistan, and Egypt came conspicuously late and would not commit themselves to anything. Discussions of religious matters were highlighted by constant quarrels and non-essential hairsplitting. In addition, the zealous Wahhabis caused bloodshed in the holy month of Ramadhan. The Egyptian pilgrims for several hundred years had the privilege of carrying to Mecca their sacred *mahmal*, a highly decorative litter, mounted on a camel and escorted by armed soldiers. When the caravan stopped at Mina, some of the Wahhabi Ikhwan argued that the *mahmal* was an idol; they were also outraged by the "music" of the Egyptian buglers. Some of the Wahhabi hot-heads stoned the *mahmal*, whereupon the Egyptian soldiers opened fire, killing a great many Wahhabis. Ibn

Saud's intervention prevented a horrible massacre. So ended the Pan-Islam congress with neither unity of purpose nor unity of action.

Another Pan-Islam Congress convened in Jerusalem (1931) was but a political fake. Called by Haj-Amin al-Hussaini, the ill-famed mufti of Jerusalem, this congress turned out to be a propaganda assembly against the Jews. The Mufti's aim was undoubtedly to rally other Moslem countries for his political machinations. No wonder that the Ulema of the al-Azhar university issued a declaration against the raising of the caliphate-question, and Ibn Sa'ud boycotted this political meeting. The decision of the delegates to convene similar meetings every other year was never carried out — further evidence of the phantom-like character of Pan-Islam.

All-Islam light flickered again in 1934 as Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan signed the pact of Saadabad. This pact, which provided for mutual consultation among the signatories, was regarded as a nucleus of a Moslem League of Nations, but it was not, for Islam as a political idea could not be resurrected.

However, as a spiritual and charitable idea, Pan-Islam has achieved some minor results. The building of the Hejaz railway to facilitate the pilgrimage to Mecca is one of them. Moslems all over the world contributed over £1,000,000 to the construction of the railway. The founding of the "Red Crescent," a Moslem equivalent to the "Red Cross," is another offshoot of Pan-Islam propaganda. All-Islam spirit perhaps inspired the founders of the Y.M.M.A. (Young Men's Moslem Association, *jemiyat ashshubban al-muslimin*). This organization, established in 1927 at Cairo, emphasizes the moral and humanitarian aspect of Islam. Modeled after a Christian pattern, it advocates rapprochement between East and West. However, its branches did not spread beyond Iran, Syria, and Palestine.

In India, too, Pan-Islam has assumed an ever spiritual aspect. The political concern of the Moslems of India is not Pan-Islam but their future political status as affected by the eventual granting of independence to India. Already in 1932, M. L. Ferrar, outstanding authority on the Moslem problem in India, wrote the following: "Forgotten now is the Pan-Islamism in which Indian Moslems showed so much interest before the war. That movement indeed is dead, but harder still, it is unwept. Events in the Hejaz, in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, or Turkey, appeal now but little to the Indian Moslem's heart and still less to their pocket. All political consciousness that he possesses is mobilized for service on the Hindu front."

Recent history has proved that nationalism doomed Pan-Islam. This political-religious idea was bound to suffer its first and foremost defeat at the hands of the Turks themselves. The revolution of the Young Turks in 1908, which dethroned Abdul-Hamid, ultimately destroyed the basic idea of Islam — that all believers, regardless of race and language, are but one brotherhood. This was apparent after the euphemic honeymoon of the Young Turk revolution during which the non-Turkish nationalities of the Empire had naively hoped for autonomy. The Young Turks under the leadership of the "Three Pashas" followed a strictly national policy with a strong racial background.

Prominent scholars like Vambery and Leon Cahun made the Turks race-minded. They discovered the Uralo-Altic race and tried to link racially the Turks of Anatolia, the Tartars of South Russia and Transcaucasia, the Turkomans, the Magyars, Finns, as well as all other peoples of Mongol stock. Two Russian Tartars, Yusef Bey Akhura Oglu and Ahmed Bey Agayeff helped spread those Pan-Turan ideas. From the way Pan-Turanism was spread, it seems as though this idea was the precursor of Nazism. Some Pan-Turanists claimed that the Turanian race had preserved vigor and

vitality of which the rest of the world is bereft because of the influence of a decadent culture, as displayed by the French. Tekin Alp saw in Prussianism a revival of vigor in Europe, and envisaged that the Turks would play a role in Asia similar to that of the Germans in Europe. Hence sprang the anti-Russian orientation of the Young Turks, which was nurtured and fully exploited by the Germans. A Pan-Turanian Empire built upon the ruins of a defeated Russia with undisputed hegemony in the Moslem World was certainly a stirring idea. This idea was also responsible for the policy of Turkifying other nationalities, particularly the Arabs. Ziya Gok Alp, preaching "cultural revolution," proposed to eliminate the Arabic and Persian words from Turkish and to translate the Koran into Turkish. Both suggestions were realized after World War I.

One code for all, and a secular one, of course, one type of education with Turkish as language of instruction for Arabs, Albanians, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews, — this was the trend of Turkish nationalism. And although that wonderful dream of a super-Empire with a Turanian master-race vanished after the defeat of Turkey in World War I, the cultural revolution of a revised and fully nationalized Turkey came true when Kemal Pasha rid his secular republic of the last vestiges of Islam. He separated state from religion irrevocably. The institution of the caliphate was abolished definitely, and a few remnants of the *Sharia* (canonic law) left over in the Constitution of 1924, were abrogated four years later. Religious education in schools was forbidden. Even instruction of Arabic at the Istanbul University was barred. Not only was the Koran translated into Turkish, but the Arabic script was replaced by the Latin alphabet.

Such drastic steps coupled with the complete emancipation of the women changed Turkey overnight into a fully Westernized state of an extreme national character. As

a non-Semitic and anti-Arab people, the Turks found it relatively easy to discard a culture which, after all, was of alien origin. Inborn discipline as well as the dictatorial system of Ataturk, the father of new Turkey, brought this national revolution to a successful conclusion. The transfer of nearly 1,300,000 Greeks from Asia Minor to their original homeland made new Turkey a homogenous and monolithic state. And when Ataturk died, in 1939, after years of hard work for his people's cause, the foundations of his edifice seemed to be resting upon a rock.

5

Arabs in World War 1

When the hour of decision struck in World War I, the Arabs under Turkish rule were far from forming a self-conscious entity with a clear-cut policy. Only a negligible handful of Arabs in Syria were imbued with what Westerners connote as nationalism. The bulk of the Arabs, being illiterate and politically indifferent, did not resent the "yoke" of the Sultan. On the contrary, they seemed to prefer their Moslem ruler to any other "infidel" intruder. Even the committee of the secret society of *al-Fatat* in Syria, which claimed to be the bearer of Arab nationalism, decided that in the event of "European designs" on the Arab provinces, this super-national organization should cast its lots with Turkey. It did not do so, however, as a result of Jemal Pasha's ruthless persecutions, but the mere fact of such a resolution proves that even the extreme nationalists among the Arabs were not prone to break away from Turkey at the beginning of the war.

When the call to *jihad* (Holy War) was issued to the whole Moslem world, the Arabs on the whole responded favorably, for as faithful Moslems, how could they disobey the *fatwa* (ruling) of the Sheikh al Islam, the highest religious authority in the Moslem World? November 11, 1914, when the Sultan called his armed forces to wage a "Holy War" for the defense of Islam, marked a rise of Pan-Islamic feelings even among the Arabs. The *jihad*-manifesto issued on November 23, 1914, and signed by twenty-nine religious authorities, called upon the whole Moslem world to rally behind the Sultan in his struggle

against the enemies of Islam. Although the rulers of the Ottoman Empire had long ago embarked upon a strictly national course, in that crucial period they had to appeal to Moslem unity. And sincere Moslems they were at that time, by all means, for the purely-secular spell, which overtook the post-war leaders of Turkey, was a result of their defeat, and proved once again that Islam as a political factor was impotent. All the pamphlets and leaflets amply distributed among the Moslems in the *jihad*-period, were permeated with both zeal and fear for the integrity of Islam. Pan-Islam was not "made in Germany." Hosts of missionaries who went out to all corners of the Moslem world to carry the call for *jihad*, consisted mostly of sincere and zealous Moslems. Of course, some spies and agitators of German brand were among them.

How did the Arab respond to the call of the Sultan? The Peninsula, which had always been split in warring camps, was split on this issue, too. Clinging to their tradition of freedom as well as to their sanctity of unrestricted feuds, the lords of Arabia, great and small alike, resented any foreign encroachment, whether Moslem or non-Moslem. No wonder that the Turks, despite garrisoning the accessible parts of Arabia, except for the central plateau, were hated by the Arabs who fought whenever a chance arose. The suzerainty of the Sultan was only nominal. Consequently, the Sublime Porte could not count upon a wholehearted support of the Arab tribes. Besides, British influence, and what is more important still, bags of gold pieces lavishly passed out by British agents, easily dissuaded some Arab chieftains from joining the Turks. For years the British had been on good terms with the Arab chieftains around the Persian Gulf. Besides the Aden Protectorate, where British influence was well established, Great Britain had concluded treaties of friendship with Bahrain, Kuwait, Masqat and other principalities. These treaties had

been well cemented by profuse streams of gold supplied by the officers of the Indian Political Service.

British domination of the Persian Gulf was of paramount importance, because of its proximity to India and the Persian oil fields. This domination enabled the British to occupy the Bahrain Islands at the very outset of the war, as well as to execute a successful landing at the head of the Persian Gulf, which was followed by a swift occupation of Basra on November 22, 1914. However, the Arabian coast on the Persian Gulf was seriously menaced by the fact that Ibn Rashid, ruler of Shammar, sided definitely with the Turks from whom he received money and arms. This news was alarming to Ibn Sa'ud, Wahhabi master of Najd, whose very existence had been constantly threatened by his aggressive neighbor, Ibn Rashid.

This situation played well into the hands of Captain J. R. Shakespear, whom the Indian Political Service entrusted with a special mission to win over Ibn Sa'ud as a fighting ally of the British. But Ibn Sa'ud, however deep his hatred toward the Turks was, could not openly and boldly defy the *jihad*-call of the Sultan. For one thing, his rule in Najd was far from being firm; surrounded by enemies and doubtful of the allegiance of certain tribes who did not like the iron-hand of their new master, he had to watch his step very cautiously in one direction or another. Besides, his fighting strength was not such as to allow risky adventures. No wonder then that he decided to preserve a state of benevolent neutrality: he definitely promised Captain Shakespear not to endorse the "Holy War" of the Sultan. Watching, however, the growing military strength of Ibn Rashid, he realized that the hour of striking could no longer be delayed.

In January, 1915, Ibn Sa'ud moved against the Rashid. But this move turned out to be a disastrous adventure, indeed. With superiority of manpower and equipment, the

tribesmen of Shammar sent Ibn Sa'ud's warriors reeling back in certain defeat. And had it not been Ibn Rashid's hesitancy to pursue his enemy to utter destruction, and the British aid in this dark hour for Ibn Sa'ud, inevitable doom would have awaited the Wahhabi chief. But fortunately, Ibn Sa'ud recuperated speedily, and remained sitting on the fence till the war was over. His friendship with the British was crowned with a treaty in 1916, whereby he agreed to recognize British sphere of influence on the Persian Gulf for which, in turn, he received supplies of arms and £5,000 as a monthly subsidy. But as a fighting ally of the British, or a leader of an Arab revolt, Ibn Sa'ud was destined to be inactive for the duration of the war. Turning to the Yaman, that back door to Aden, the British were unable to sever the friendly relations of the Imam and his subjects with the Sultan. The Imam remained faithful to Islam and his caliph. The two Turkish divisions stationed there held out to the end.

Anxious to incite the horsemen of the desert against the Turks, the British were looking for an ally who best could suit their political as well as their military purposes. This prospective ally was, unquestionably, the Sharif* Hussain of Mecca. As the Custodian of the two Holy cities, his position in Islam was unequaled. Unlike Ibn Sa'ud, who as a Wahhabi was but a heretic, Hussain was an orthodox Sunni. A revolt by the Sharif of Mecca was bound to have invaluable repercussion. By defying the Sultan, the first serious breach of Moslem unity would be accomplished, and the edge of *jihad* would be blunted considerably. Furthermore, a revolt in Hejaz, if successfully carried out, would isolate the Turkish garrisons in Shammar, the Yaman and Hejaz, and would protect the left flank of the armies marching toward Baghdad, as well as the right

* Title of Moslem nobility; chief magistrate.

flank of the armies marching from Egypt toward Palestine and Syria.

Those considerations prompted the British Military Intelligence Agency in Cairo to act fast. Fortunately, the British Agency had something to hinge on in its contact with the Sharif's family, for it was Abdullah, the second son of the Sharif, who already in 1913 had approached Lord Kitchener and Ronald Storrs with a definite purport to secure British aid for buttressing his father's rule in Hejaz. Abdullah, who had a seat in the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies as an Arab representative, was aware of the fact that the Sublime Porte was not satisfied with ambitious Hussain and had planned to replace him by a more faithful dignitary. Hussain was ready to resist, and Abdullah applied for help. But Lord Kitchener very politely refused to commit himself to anything. Similarly, Ronald Storrs, Oriental Secretary to the British Agency, while playing chess with Abdullah, told him flatly that the British would not be able to provide him with machine guns, for which he had asked in unmistakable language. Notwithstanding this failure of Abdullah's mission, the contact was reestablished after the outbreak of the War.

This contact led to lengthy negotiations between the Sharif of Mecca and the High Commissioner of Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon. Those negotiations, as reflected in a series of documents known as the McMahon Correspondence and published by the British Government (Parliamentary Papers) in 1939, make it clear that Hussain was willing to break away from the Sultan upon two conditions. First, Great Britain was to recognize the independence of the Arab countries within the borders outlined by the Sharif, namely from the line Mersin-Adana on the North to the Indian Ocean in the South, and from the Persian Gulf on the East to the Red Sea and Mediterranean Sea on the

West. Secondly, Hussain insisted that Great Britain agree to the proclamation of an Arab Caliphate for Islam. The second demand was granted by the British, provided, of course, the caliphate was reestablished by the Arabs or Moslems. So were many other demands accorded by Sir Henry. But the first demand as formulated by Hussain and his advisers, gave rise to serious objections on the part of McMahon. Though agreeing in principle to Arab independence, McMahon excluded "The districts of Mersin and Alexandretta, and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus and Aleppo" on the ground that they were not purely Arab. Further, Great Britain reserved for herself the right to set up a special administration in southern Iraq (the Vilayets of Baghdad and Basra).

This question of the frontiers has become the bone of contention between Britain and certain Arab malcontents, and rose to a high pitch particularly with regard to the Palestinian issue. Piles of literature have been accumulated to prove that Palestine was included in the realm of Arab aspirations. George Antonius switched on all the lights of his hair-splitting mind in order to convince us that "the portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus and Aleppo" could have meant but one thing—the Mediterranean Sea. Any layman, by drawing a line as evident on the map (p. 83), could see for himself the implication of this phrase. Mersin, Adana, Alexandretta were overwhelmingly Turkish; Lebanon had a majority of Christians; and Palestine had a Jewish population of 90,000.

The term "district" used by the British, or "wilaya" in the Arab text of the document, does not necessarily correspond to the Turkish "vilayet," for there was no vilayet of Damascus. Nor were there vilayets of Hama and Homs; therefore the term "district" may connote even such an administrative unit as a county.

In March 1939 a special committee, comprised of Arabs and British, was set up by the British government with the sole aim of clarifying that phrase in the McMahon correspondence. And after a thorough investigation, the British government came to the final conclusion that "the — — — portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Hama, Homs, and Aleppo, embrace all that portion of Syria (including what is now called Palestine) lying to the west of *inter alia* the administrative area known as Vilayet of Syria." (1) But in 1916 there was no Palestinian question as yet. Besides, the problem of the future boundaries of the Arab independence area could not be discussed in detail; nor was Great Britain resolved, as it is evident from the McMahon correspondence, to sign a definite agreement with Hussain, making him the supreme lord of an independent Arabia. In note 5 of that correspondence it was plainly stated "That, when circumstances permit, Great Britain will help the Arabs with her advice and assist them in the establishment of governments to suit those diverse regions." Knowing the diversity of the Arab countries and aware of the fact that Hussain represented only the family of the Hashimites, but not the Arabs as a whole, the British were extremely cautious about committing themselves to a definite structure of the Arab provinces after the war.

True, the Sharif of Mecca styled himself as the spokesman of the "entire Arab nation," but this grandiose phrase had no real meaning. For had the Sharif secured but a superficial cross section of the "public opinion" of the dozen or more states of the Peninsula plus Syria and Iraq, he would surely have realized to his dismay, as it actually happened after the war, that he could speak only in behalf

(1) Report of a Committee set up to consider certain correspondence between Sir Henry McMahon and the Sharif of Mecca, March 16, 1939. London Annex B, 18 (Parliamentary Papers)

of his family. There was absolutely no national movement behind the high aspirations of Hussain, although he had been in contact with the nationalists of Syria. But his personal ambitions of attaining two crowns, one as the king of *all* Arabs, and the other as the Caliph of Islam, were quite sufficient to make him cast his lots with the "infidel" British.

Some Arab historians tell us that the persecutions and executions of the Syrian nationalists prompted Hussain to forsake the Sultan-caliph. This interpretation is subject to doubt, for mercy and compassion were the least of motives whichever could appeal to the fighting Arab. On the other hand, it has been historically proved that Hussain and Faisal, unlike Abdullah, had been long resisting the idea of deserting the Moslem front. For, if the Sultan allied himself with non-Moslems, he did so for the sake of Islam to fight *infidels*. But Hussain, in casting his lot with the British, would commit a much graver sin, for this step implied an alliance with "infidels" to take up arms against believers. And as a pious Moslem he probably was aware of the verse in the Koran which reads: "Whoso slayeth a believer for set purpose, his reward is hell forever. Allah is wroth against him and He hath cursed him and prepared for him an awful doom." (Surah IV, 93). But apparently his alluring dream of an empire and the ever increasing number of boxes with shining gold pieces made him cast his religious scruples overboard.

The revolt of the Sharif became a reality on June 5, 1916. His appeal to the Moslems of the world in the name of "Islamic solidarity" to follow this example was not a well thought-out piece of propaganda. Nor did it work for his cause. Sayyed Ahmed as-Sanussi heeded the call of the Sultan and invaded Egypt, where his ardent followers drove to Marsa Matruh. The Sultan of Darfur in Sudan, too, followed his example and fought the British. The Moslems in India were exasperated at the act of Hussain, and

they too took up arms in the defense of Islam. Arabs of Medina carried the holy banner of the prophet all the way to Damascus to deliver it to the Turkish army marching against the British in Egypt. Arabs from Iraq, Syria and Palestine served loyally with the Turks. The Arab tribes of the Negeb (Southern Palestine) sided with the Turks. So did the Bani Sakhar in Transjordan. An entire division in the XIIth Turkish Army Corps was purely Arab. Despite Hussain's call for desertion, the number of deserters was negligible. Even the Shiites helped the Sultan in arousing Islamic sentiments among the Arabs of Iraq. The two leaders from Syria, Amir Shakib Arslan and Abdul-Aziz at-Thaalibi embarked upon a pro-Turkish policy, calling their fellow Arabs to fight French and English aggression.

Nevertheless the die was cast, and the revolt went on. The Arabs outside the Peninsula, either those of Syria or those of Iraq, did not rise against the Turks, hence this revolt can not be regarded as a spontaneous movement of a national character. Its military value was, however, of considerable importance. The capture of Mecca by the rebels was a severe blow to the Turks. With Hejaz in the hold of Hussain's men, the Turkish garrisons in the Yaman had been isolated. Of course, except for guerilla warfare the horsemen of the desert did not fight any spectacular or decisive battles which drove the Turks out of Palestine, Syria and Iraq. They were even unable to capture Medina, where the Turkish garrison gallantly held out till the Armistice. From the evidences provided by T. E. Lawrence, Allenby and Wavell, it is apparent that the number of the Arab participants in the revolt ranged from eight to ten thousand men. Since they were not regulars, it was quite difficult to exploit them fully in planned campaigns. Under the guidance of T. E. Lawrence they turned into efficient demolition squads and formidable raiders, representing a constant threat to the left flank of the Turkish armies in

Syria. Their commanding officers had a hard time disciplining these sons of the desert.

When a decisive campaign was launched by General Allenby in September 1918, the British Commander was very much disappointed, as only 600 men moved to Azraq, while thousands mysteriously disappeared behind the shifting dunes. However, in the following days when British troops victoriously marched toward Damascus, the Arabs mercilessly harassed the retreating Turks in Transjordan until Damascus fell on October 1, 1918. After the British cavalry had driven into Damascus, Amir Faisal with about a thousand of his horsemen entered this ancient city to the delight of cheering crowds. The war was rapidly drawing to a close, and on October 30th, defeated Turkey signed the Mudros Armistice.

The Arab provinces had been liberated from the Turkish yoke as a result of successful campaigns performed by over a million British soldiers. In comparison with the casualties suffered by the British 50,000 in the Palestinian-Syrian campaign and 70,000 in the Iraqi campaign, the sacrifices of the Arabs are extremely negligible. There are no exact figures available as to the Arab casualties. However, on the basis of the small number of the Arab participants in the revolt, and judging by the nature of Arab engagements in the war, the casualties of Hussain's hosts seemed to have been slight. A sum of £4,000,000 in gold was spent for the organization of the Arab revolt. And although this revolt did not turn into an uprising on a large scale, it had a profound bearing on the shaping of the Arab World.

Hussain as the central figure of the revolt was impatiently looking forward to the realization of his ambitious dreams. With the abrogation of Turkish dominance over the Arab provinces, Hussain firmly believed that Allah had chosen the Hashimites not only to rule the Arab World but also to play first fiddle in the Moslem world as bearers

of a revived caliphate. Already on November 2, 1916, five odd months after the outbreak of the revolt, he hastily made his first step toward achieving his goal. Before a gathering of a few Arab elders he proclaimed himself "King of the Arab Countries." This hasty and ill-timed deed caused a great deal of uproar among the other rulers of the Arab provinces. The British and the French governments were stunned by that act of the impatient Sharif. Cognizant, however, of the Sharif's importance as the head of the revolt, they had pondered the problem for a long time until in January, 1917, they recognized him as "King of Hejaz" only. But even this Kingdom, he was unable to hold, for a mighty rival in the Peninsula was forging a sword which was bound to shatter irrevocably Hussain's ambitious dreams of a Pan-Arab Empire and an Arab caliphate. Ibn Sa'ud was on the march.

6

Ibn Saud's Heroic Ascent

With the conclusion of World War I, the Arab Peninsula found itself absolutely free and independent. No foreign encroachment, no alien garrison, restricted the atmosphere of freedom, so deeply inherent in Arab nature. The presence of the British in Aden and its protectorate was neither intruding nor irritating, inasmuch as the Arab sheikhs on the Southern seaboard, having been for decades in British pay, had little cause to fear British interference in their internal affairs. Turkish sovereignty, which had meant constant garrisoning and occasional punitive expeditions into the interior of the Arab homeland, was gone forever. But the departure of the last Turk did not bring peace to the inhabitants of the Peninsula. The post-war structure intensified traditional differences. Particularism, or clan-patriotism, that intrinsic feature of Arab mentality, brought about a flareup of old feuds, and caused new ones to explode.

The first and foremost result was that Arabia had been split into five independent states. Hussain's assumption of the title "King of the Arabs," or "King of the Arab countries," was a meaningless mirage. Factually he was only the King of Hejaz. Both in military strength and in popularity, more powerful than Hussain, was his neighbor, Ibn Sa'ud, the Sultan of Najd. To the south, Yahya ruled the independent Imamate of the Yaman. Just between Hejaz and the Yaman there lay the state of Asir, whose ruler, the Idrisi Muhammad, was looked upon with askance by his southern neighbor, Ibn Rashid, ruler of Shammar, who enjoyed full independence too. Besides those five prin-

cial states of Arabia, there were a number of city-states as Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Lahay, Abu-Dhabi on the Persian Gulf, and six Trucial Sheikdoms on the southern seaboard. Such a multiplicity of states and regions could make for anything but unity. The vast area of 1,000,000 square miles thinly populated by about 8,000,000 inhabitants represented an unsurmountable obstacle to any central authority attempting to wield control over the whole of Arabia.

Religious diversity was another stumbling block to unity. Hejaz was Sunni, meaning the orthodox view of Islam which accepts the interpretation of the Koran as reflected in the later traditions known as Sunna. Najd, as we know, was the cradle of Wahhabism, or puritanic Islam which recognizes the Koran as the sole source of divine revelation and the only mode of life for the Moslem. The Yamanis are opposed to both views, being a branch of the Shiya, which was founded by the Prophet's son-in-law, Ali, and whose doctrine was based on the belief that the divine power of the Prophet had incarnated in Ali and his descendants. Oman practices Ibadhism, a brand of the first schism in Islam as represented by the Khawarij. The inhabitants of Hadhramaut belong to the school of Shafiism, so called after its founder ash-Shafi, who contended that *ijma*, the opinion of the majority of the believers, is also a source of law, besides the Koran and the Sunna. Hence a law of the Koran may be interpreted or modified by the Sunna or the *ijma*. This list of religious sectarianism could easily be extended, but as short as it is, it can hardly provide cement for Arab unity. Dynastical rivalries constituted still another stumbling block to unity.

But, despite all those stumbling blocks in the way of uniting the diverse provinces of Arabia, there has emerged a man of a heroic stature who has tried to fuse the Arabs of the Peninsula into one political community. He has done so in the best Arab tradition of uniting quarreling tribes

by the might of a strong hand which unflinchingly wields a mighty sword.

This man is Abdul-Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, the most outstanding and colorful figure of all Arab rulers in modern times. His rise to power in a cruel environment and in face of untold hardships is not only a remarkable testimonial to what heights a strong individual is able to climb but also embodies the spirit of a genuine Arab-awakening which is religious-national to all intents and purposes. We have seen how the Wahhabi Empire of Ibn Sa'ud the Great disappeared like a whiff of chaff before the striking sword of Mehemed Ali. The reborn Wahhabi state was slowly rising from the ashes, but the Shammar tribes with Turkish backing, as well as the inner strifes of the Sauds, reduced Wahhabi Najd to an impotent and negligible province. Young Ibn Sa'ud, the son of the devout Abdur-Rahman, witnessed the unforgettable scene of how the Rashids captured Riad in 1891 and forced the Sauds into exile among the most primitive Murra tribes. The dismal defeat of the once proud Sauds turned out to be the clue of Ibn Sa'ud's later successes. For one thing, it inspired in him the belief that Allah had chosen him to be the avenger of his clan. Secondly, wandering from region to region and seeing the frivolous conduct, as well as the petty quarrels, of his co-religionists, he, who had been reared in a strict Wahhabi environment, came also to believe that Allah had entrusted him with a mission to purify the Arabs and unite them in a common cause of his faith. In exile, far from the heart of Najd, he grew up hardened and extremely inured to hardships.

Towering above all his fellow Arabs, he impressed them with his physical strength. He succeeded in welding his closest friends into an inspired and fighting unit. Unlike his pious father, Ibn Saud could not acquiesce to lead a shadow existence among hospitable tribes. His imagination

was gripped by a fiery desire to recapture Riad and once again to raise the glory of the Wahhabis. At the age of twenty he began to act. Employing a very risky and bold stroke, he stole into the walled city at night, and with a handful of courageous men occupied the strategic points of Riad. At sunrise, he chanted the traditional morning-prayer and set his men for the main attack. While his companions were ready to strike, he searched for the governor, Ajlan, who was expected, as a matter of routine, to proceed from his palace to the Mosque. At the opportune moment, while the governor was ascending the steps of the Mosque, Ibn Sa'ud charged and slaughtered him in cold blood. He did not forget to kiss his sword, a pleasant duty performed by Ibn Sa'ud whenever he stood a chance of killing a respectable foe. This bold move made him master of Riad.

What happened later is but a kaleidoscope of successive attacks, skirmishes and raids in which ambushing, sniping and murdering at large played the most vital role. Having entrenched himself in Riad, he slowly extended his domain, jabbing cautiously at his arch-enemy, the master of Shammar. As a result of his alarming raids, Ibn Sa'ud came to grips with the Turks who in 1904 sent reinforcements to their faithful vassal, Ibn Rashid. This prompted Ibn Sa'ud to act. With his mobile cavalry he attacked the heavily equipped Turks, who, inexperienced in desert warfare and unable to maneuver with their heavy equipment, succumbed to the lightning thrusts of Ibn Sa'ud's hosts. But the leader of the Wahhabis was not blinded by this victory. As a born diplomat, he accepted an offer from Constantinople to recognize suzerainty of the Sultan as well as to agree to Turkish garrisons in Anaiza and Buraida.

Those garrisons had no opportunity to put a straight-jacket upon Ibn Sa'ud. Isolated, as they were, in an inhospitable desert land, they had to face constant sniping

and actual hunger. Some deserted, some were slain, the others sold their rifles; and so the Turks vanished from Najd, seemingly not as a result of an open clash with Ibn Sa'ud but rather as a sequence of peculiar circumstances. The Turkish authorities swallowed the pill, having been confronted with greater headaches in other provinces. This withdrawal played well into the hands of Ibn Sa'ud, who attacked the tribes of Shammar, killing their ruler.

While Ibn Sa'ud was watching the weakening of the Rashid's power primarily due to their internal quarrels, a new enemy came into the foreground. It was Hussain Ibn Ali of the Hashimite family of Mecca, whom the Turks had appointed Sharif of Mecca in 1908. The first armed clash between Hussain and Ibn Sa'ud occurred over the Ataiba tribes and their highlands, which Ibn Sa'ud regarded as his undisputable domain. The boastful and Turkish-mannered Hussain became an object of hatred and scorn to Ibn Sa'ud, who often described the Hashimite as "an abomination that stinks in my nostrils." He craved for the day when he would be able to teach him a lesson in the Wahhabi manner, but the time had not come yet, for Ibn Sa'ud was surrounded with other foes, as the sheikh of Kuwait, and besides he had to quell some uprisings of his own tribes, not to mention a few conspiracies of his cousins who envied Ibn Sa'ud's rise to power. In all those predicaments he came out victorious, inasmuch as he acted firmly, suppressing the rebels with an iron hand. Bloody massacres and official executions by beheading raised his prestige among the Arabs, but there always remained that uncertainty of the tribes who looked for an opportunity to extricate themselves from his iron-clad hand. Ibn Sa'ud knew his fellow-Arabs, and was, therefore, extremely careful to show no sign of weakness or wavering. So distrustful was he of his subjects, that he never went to sleep without his sword beside him.

When World War I came to the reaches of the Peninsula, Ibn Sa'ud, as we know, chose the convenient path of neutrality. He did not think it wise to join the "infidels" in their fight against the Sultan. But on the other hand, he did not shun the opportunity of obtaining money and arms from the same "infidels," nor did he sever his relations with the Turks, to whom he had been selling camels and horses. His only major engagement during the war was the unsuccessful campaign against the Rashids. While the campaigns in Iraq and Syria were going on, he was busy massing arms and preparing his men for bigger things to come. Hussain's boastful letter to Ibn Sa'ud, demanding his recognition as "King of the Arab countries," made his blood boil, but he was unable to move yet. St. John Philby, who was sent by the British to Ibn Sa'ud after Captain Shakespear had been killed in the thick of the fight with the Shammar, would not advise him to take up arms against Hussain, who was a British ally. So he was patiently waiting until the war was over.

In 1919 Abdullah, the second son of Hussain, marshalled an army of 4000 fairly equipped men with a view to occupying Khurma where Ibn Sa'ud had thousands of followers. Ibn Sa'ud did not move ostensibly against his foe, but at his instigation the people of Khurma attacked the Hejazi army suddenly at night and slaughtered the sleeping heroes who were not given a chance to fight. Abdullah himself, whom Ibn Sa'ud called "poisonous fellow," was lucky to escape in his night gown. This time the Ikhwan, the militant brotherhood of the Wahhabis, pressed for action against that "heretic" Hussain and shouted "on to Mecca." But Ibn Sa'ud still could not commit an act which would arouse the anger of his British friends. For the time being he contented himself with the submission of Khurma and the Ataiba tribes.

However, as time went by he found himself encircled by ever-growing foes. Of course, his main enemies were the Hashimites, who grabbed all the spoils. Hussain was King of Hejaz, Abdullah became Amir in Transjordan, and Faisal was enthroned in Iraq. The Rashids, although weakened considerably by the Wahhabi thrusts and inner dissensions, still presented some menace. On the Persian Gulf, the sheikh of Kuwait was hostile, as ever. And to the south, Imam Yahya grew ever stronger, thanks to his Italian friends. Such being the situation, Ibn Sa'ud's great problem was how to break that encirclement. Like Hitler, he chose the only possible way, namely, the strategy of piecemeal breaking. The Rashids, being the weakest, were the first victims of this strategy. In 1921 he struck at Hail, the capital of Shammar, and conquered the entire territory of the once mighty Rashids. This conquest was all the easier thanks to a systematic propaganda of a strong Wahhabi "Fifth Column" inside. With the whole of Central Arabia in Ibn Sa'ud's hold, the fanatic Ikhwan cried for more conquest, clamoring to wipe out "those heretics" in Transjordan and Iraq. Without Ibn Sa'ud's knowledge, the Ikhwan of the Harb tribe drove within fifteen miles of Amman, but there they received a hot reception from the British planes and armored cars. The whole party was ripped to shreds, and thus it learned how dangerous it was to stick out its neck from the confines of the Peninsula. But Ibn Sa'ud was wise enough to come to terms with the British regarding his northern frontiers with Iraq. A neutral zone for grazing and a subsidy settled the incident in 1922, at Ojair where Sir Percy Cox concluded the agreement.

Ibn Sa'ud waited for his greatest moment. It came in 1924, when the strongest link in the encirclement ring was broken. Fortunately for Ibn Sa'ud, Hussain proved himself

a very poor ruler. He who had dreamed of a vast empire was unable to put even his small kingdom of Hejaz in order. He turned the pilgrimage to Mecca into a private business, monopolizing such commodities as water and food. The roads were unsafe because of highway-robbery sanctioned from time immemorial. Arab raiders were exacting heavy tolls from the pilgrims, and millions of Moslems, particularly the Wahhabis, were charging that Mecca had become an abode of brawls and unworthy scenes. The Hindu Moslems would not see a "traitor" as the custodian of the Holy Cities. But Hussain seemed blind to his unpopularity among the Moslems at large and his own subjects. He climbed ever higher on the ladder of megalomania. When the British sent T. E. Lawrence in 1923 to negotiate a treaty with Hussain whereby he could be safe in his kingdom, the master of Hejaz was unreasonable and kept on hammering on an empire. He even went so far as to flirt with Moscow. Finally he took the most slippery step, which spelled his doom.

Three days after the Great Assembly in Ankara had abolished the Caliphate, Hussain hastily proclaimed himself caliph. Ibn Sa'ud raged with anger. The Ikhwan were again on the march. Ibn Sa'ud understood that the British would not interfere in this "Holy War" in the Holy Land. He moved quickly and staged a massacre in Taif near Mecca. The inhabitants of Mecca, frightened by the example of Taif, forced Hussain to abdicate, threatening to burn his palace. The once mighty leader of the Arab revolt found himself without followers, without allies and without an army to fight the Wahhabis. In haste he packed his belongings, carefully watching the numerous boxes of gold pieces he had so eagerly hoarded since the outbreak of the revolt. He fled Mecca, escaping the avenging sword of Ibn Sa'ud. The once proud King of Hejaz had to seek British protection on the island of Cyprus. He died six

years later at Amman, unhappy and broken-hearted, for his dream of a Pan-Arab Empire had foundered upon the hard rock of reality. Although his son Ali kept on resisting Ibn Sa'ud for some time, the final capitulation of the Hashimites came in December, 1925. Ibn Sa'ud was proclaimed King of Hejaz on January 8, 1926.

In capturing Mecca, Ibn Sa'ud revealed himself a very clever diplomat. After the massacre in Taif he dispatched 2000 of his picked troops, dressed in white pilgrim robes, having given them strict orders not to massacre or loot. Unlike Ibn Sa'ud the Great, he entered the city without sword, and as a pious pilgrim he blessed God for calling upon him to protect the sacred shrines of Islam. Both the Sunni and the Shi'ites were stunned at the fact that the "heretic" Wahhabi had become the Custodian of the Holy Cities. Of course the *Ikhwan* razed some decorations at the Kaaba and destroyed some structures on the grave of the Prophet, but there were no major outbursts of Wahhabi fanaticism. Ibn Sa'ud was even planning to give some share in governing the Holy Cities to the Moslems the world over, but after the Pan-Islamic Congress in Mecca he came to a final conclusion that no one in the Moslem world could protect the cities better than himself. To the Moslems of India and Egypt, who looked upon him as upon an unorthodox and ignorant Bedouin, he made it clear that he would not have any of their cosmopolitical nonsense which involved establishing in Hejaz an all-Moslem government with Indian or Egyptian police. He also told them in plain language that he alone, the only independent Moslem ruler who had conquered Hejaz by Allah and by the might of his right arm, would henceforth rule Hejaz. And so he did.

With Hejaz in his firm grip, he could look forward to further conquests. The petty principality of Asir, being in a state of permanent turmoil since the conclusion of the

war, invited aggressive designs from the south. Sayyid Hussain ibn Ali al Idrisi, the master of Asir, placed his country under Ibn Sa'ud's protection in 1926. This was a bloodless conquest. But the period of Ibn Sa'ud's wars for hegemony in the Peninsula was not yet over. There was still one independent ruler within his reach.

However, before Ibn Sa'ud turned to the far south of Arabia, he had to grapple with threats of inner revolts against his rule. This time a revolt was pending from the extreme group of his own Ikhwan who accused Ibn Sa'ud of being too lenient and moderate toward the Hejazis, Iraqis and English. Especially the tribes of Mutair, Ajman and Ataiba, with their rebellious chiefs Dawish, Hithlain and Bajid, threatened the unity of his political structure by constant raiding. Like Hitler in dealing with his radical opposition led by Roehm, Ibn Sa'ud likewise resorted to a bloody purge, slaying by hundreds the rebelling tribes and their radical chiefs. His dealing with the tribes of Harb was even more reckless. Faced with a plot of the Harb who even secured the aid of Abdullah, Ibn Sa'ud surprised them with his motor cars, burned their villages, razed their dwellings and mercilessly executed all the rebels. Having quelled those uprisings, Ibn Sa'ud was free to map plans for the conquest of the last independent state on the Peninsula.

As a result of an agreement with the Italians signed on June 1, 1927, Imam Yahya received modern weapons and consequently, embarked upon a policy of aggression to the north as well as to the south. Yamani troops penetrated into the British protectorate of Aden, whereupon the British bombed Yaman, and thus put an end to the Imam's intrusions. Meanwhile Ibn Sa'ud resented Yahya's alliance with the Italians, because first he would not like to have a well armed neighbor, and secondly, by admitting infidel advisers into Arabia, the Imam endangered Ibn Sa'ud's policy

of keeping any foreign power from penetrating into the Holy Land of Islam. The Imam's thrusts into southern Asir caused "border clashes" between the two rulers of Arabia to be followed by a real war in 1934.

Ibn Sa'ud's troops won a decisive victory over the Yamanis, whereupon the road to annexation of the Yaman was surely open. But Ibn Sa'ud did not exploit his victory this time. Under the pressure of the British, who undoubtedly would not like to see a too strong Arab ruler at their backdoor to Aden, Ibn Sa'ud signed a peace treaty with Yahya on May 20, 1934, whereby the latter recognized Ibn Sa'ud's full sovereignty over the whole of Asir. Ibn Sa'ud did so also for religious-political reasons, for he was well aware of the fact that by his annexation of the only Shi'ite state in Arabia he would evoke unpleasant repercussions in the whole Shi'ite world.

With the conclusion of the Yamani campaign, Ibn Sa'ud's policy of conquest came to an end not because the Wahhabi lord had no more aggressive designs, but because he realized that any further expansion of his rule would lead to a serious clash with the British. And being a diplomat and an experienced ruler who knew his limitations, he preferred to stop where he was and devote his energy toward building his hard-won kingdom. As a true Wahhabi he was eager to base his political structure on the sacred law of the Koran. And unlike the other Arab states outside the Peninsula, Saudi Arabia knows but one law, namely, the Shari'a. As the supreme judge of his state, Ibn Sa'ud is on guard against any penetration of the Western code into the Holy Land of Arabia. Except for money, weapons and some other technical devices, Arabia is forbidden to foreigners and foreign influences.

The fanatic Wahhabis are on constant guard against any innovations which are incompatible with the spirit and the letter of the Koran. So it took a great deal of courage

and persuasion for Ibn Sa'ud to convince his theologians that the telephone, wireless, armored-car, and airplane are not creations of the devil. Motorized traffic, motorized police-patrols and motorized caravans of pilgrims are some of the modern features Ibn Sa'ud has succeeded in introducing in his desert-Kingdom. Mechanization is one of the most effective means of conquering the desert and its vast and trackless stretches. Besides, it excellently serves the purpose of unification and government control of distant provinces. Particularly, the wireless-equipped patrol-cars insure speedy execution of Ibn Sa'ud's orders. Mechanization enabled Ibn Sa'ud to cope with his most important problem in unifying the tribes under a central authority. Throughout the centuries raiding had been a sanctity among the Bedouins, the very symbol of their tribal freedom. Moreover, it had provided a respectable source of livelihood. Whether plain robbery, or euphemistic "toll," it did not jibe with Ibn Sa'ud's concept of a new order in the Peninsula. Realizing that tribal warfare and raiding were the very dynamite that threatened to wreck his unified Kingdom, he forbade both, and with an iron hand he has suppressed all outbreaks of malcontents who would not give up their ancient traditions. The motor car also made possible Ibn Sa'ud's swift and strict dealing with disobedient elements. The roads in Arabia under Ibn Sa'ud's watchful control are relatively safe.

Whether Ibn Sa'ud has really succeeded in stamping out those deeply rooted habits of the Bedouin, is hard to say. The future alone holds the answer to that problem, as well as to Ibn Sa'ud's efforts to change the nomad into a settler by founding colonies in Hejaz. Those colonies, however small in number and scope, are nevertheless an extremely interesting experiment that might tell us whether this endeavor of the desert to transform its social and economic order is only a mirage or a reality.

The increasing number of artesian wells in Arabia as well as the rich deposits of oil, exploited by the California Arabian Standard Oil Company, may add considerably to the economic development of this desert-land, provided, of course, an efficient administration would utilize the resources of Arabia to the benefit of all her inhabitants. But such a provision is a democratic principle which has not as yet any place in the autocratic system of Saudi Arabia.

Perhaps such a system as prevails in Arabia is a result of specific conditions, for the unification of the Arab provinces as brought about by Ibn Sa'ud could have been achieved only by anti-democratic means. Besides, the political and social outlook of the Arab is anything but democratic. It is worth noting that Sa'udi Arabia is one of the rare spots on earth where slavery has not been abolished. It is a social institution sanctioned by the Koran; hence no puritanic Arab ruler will want to see it abolished, particularly as slaves perform very useful services as bodyguards, house servants, laborers and concubines. Slave dealers may roam around Ibn Sa'ud's kingdom just as in ancient times.

Polygamy, which is in Arabia tantamount to the enslavement of women, is also sanctioned by the sacred law, according to which a Moslem can possess no more than four wives at a time. Since the man is always at liberty to divorce his wife, Ibn Sa'ud has made full use of this convenient stipulation. To prove his virility to his subjects so they may respect him ever more, he married more than a hundred wives, constantly replacing one of the four so as to not refute the sacred law. The number of slave-concubines is considerable too. His sons can be counted by the scores. The name of Abdul-Aziz Ibn Sa'ud among his subjects is a symbol of a ruler who deserves respect because he acquired his kingdom by the might of his right

arm. As a judge he sticks faithfully to the letter of the Koran. Theft, for instance, is punished by cutting off one's arm; to a Westerner it is a horrible and barbaric act. But to Ibn Sa'ud lopping off a hand and putting it into hot oil is just a matter of juridical routine.

From the above it is self-evident that Westerners could not accomplish very much in Arabia with a set of democratic principles. For one thing, Arabia has remained immune and most hostile to any cultural and military penetration of the West. Secondly, it would be a futile and an extremely dangerous step to forward ideas that undermine a religious system which for centuries has been dear and sacred to the millions of the Peninsula.

Thus Saudi Arabia is marching its own way — a totalitarian regime sanctioned by the Koran and supported by a fanatic party of the Wahhabi Ikhwan; a land where the Pan-Arab dream, conceived by Ibn Sa'ud the Great, once again fired a great son of the desert to unite the Arabs and purify them by the sword of the faith. Has Ibn Sa'ud succeeded in realizing his dream? Of course, not; for he dreamed as his grandfather dreamed, of a great Empire which would also include Iraq and Syria. But he has hardly united the Peninsula proper. Kuwait, Aden, Hadhramaut, Bahrain, and the Yaman remain outside his reign. Is the edifice of Saudi Arabia based on solid foundations or is it, as many states in the past were, only another castle built on sand? Will this united kingdom survive its founder?

Only Allah knows. For seeds of eventual dissension have not been extirpated. Separatist tendencies of the annexed territories will undoubtedly come to life with the first sign of confusion after Ibn Sa'ud dies. The rebellious tribes, whose freedom had to be suppressed by Ibn Sa'ud's iron hand, will miss no opportunity to throw off the Sa'udi yoke. The extremists among the Wahhabis, too, constitute a menace to the integrity of Sa'udi Arabia. And lastly, the con-

siderable host of Ibn Sa'ud's sons make a fight for succession very likely. Although Ibn Sa'ud has picked his eventual successor in the person of his able son Sa'ud, the Amir of Najd, it is not known how his other son, Faisal, Amir of Hejaz, will react. Besides, there is another pretendant to the throne, his ambitious son Muhammad, a fanatic disciple of uncompromising Wahhabism, who by virtue of his opposition to the mechanical innovations of his father, has the strong backing of the Wahhabi Ulema. But as long as Ibn Sa'ud is the unchallenged master of his kingdom, nothing is apt to happen which will shake the foundations of his edifice.

At the age of 59, being at the peak of his glory, Ibn Sa'ud was tensely watching the fateful events which brought about a new world conflagration. Was there anything in store for Arabia?

Cradle of Arab Nationalism

It is rather a paradox that Syria was destined to become the cradle of Arab nationalism, for Syria, being a real Babel of races, nationalities and religions, has produced the most heterogeneous of all Arab speaking peoples. Is there another spot in Asia that has undergone so many ethnical changes throughout the centuries as Syria has? What a motley background evolves from that Babel, which has absorbed Phoenicians, Hittites, Arameans, Hebrews, Philistines, Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Turks and others! The existence of twenty religious sects in a relatively small area speaks for itself. The Moslems of Syria are split into Sunnites, Alouites, Shi'ites, Druzes and Ismailites; and the Christians even excel their Moslem neighbors in sectarianism. Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics, Gregorians, Jacobites, Protestants are but a fraction of that long register. And oddly enough, from such a melting pot there emerged the cultural renaissance of the Arabs in modern times.

The Wahhabi awakening in Arabia, as we have learned, was principally a religious movement, and as such precluded any possibility of secularism. Modern nationalism, however, replaced the religious outlook by a secular idea which derived its power from the political and cultural aspirations of the peoples in their fight for independence. This secularism of Western brand won a complete victory in Turkey by destroying the political as well as the cultural aspects of Islam. But in the Arab lands, where Islam still retains some power as a cultural and even political

factor, the process of secularization has proceeded at a snail's pace. Here the bonds of religion had to be removed slowly and gradually. The friction between religion and nationalism in the Arab lands has never taken such a sharp turn as witnessed in Turkey. On the contrary, in many instances the Arab nationalists purposely colored their ideas with Islamic tinge. Syria was not the first Arab speaking land to open her gates to modern nationalism; Egypt did so several decades earlier. But Syria was the first Arab speaking country to ride toward nationalism on the vehicle of cultural awakening.

This awakening, however, did not spring from Moslem sources, oddly enough, for modern nationalism is of Western origin. Consequently, Arab nationalism in Syria owes its origin to Christian Westerners rather than to Moslem Arabs. French and American missions, which stepped up their activities in Syria during Ibrahim Pasha's reign (1834-1840), stimulated education by founding schools, especially in the Lebanon. The transfer by Eli Smith of a printing press from Malta to Bairut was one of the decisive factors of enlightenment, in that hundreds of books in Arabic reached thousands of Syrians. The establishment of the Syrian Protestant College in Bairut (1866) made possible the growth of a Syrian intelligentsia who played a predominant role in the cultural rebirth of the country.

Arabic and Arab culture of the past were brought to life again, thanks to such famous men of letters as Nasif Yazeji and Butrus Bustani. Both being Christians of the Lebanon, they took upon themselves the hard task of rearing a new generation on the cultural values of the Arab past. By composing valuable works in Arabic grammar, rhetoric and vocabulary, they not only improved the literary standard of Syrian Arabic in the Nineteenth Century, but also evoked, among the Moslems particularly, a sense of pride in their glorious history. Butrus Bustani founded the first periodical

in Syria (Nafir Suriyah-Clarion of Syria), and also undertook to present his generation with a renewed translation of the Bible, a fact which links us with the rebirth of the national literatures in Europe, whose incipient product had always been a translation of the Bible into the native tongue. There came into being cultural societies with the aim of fostering education and bringing about an understanding between the different creeds. But those societies, being mostly and predominantly Christian, had little effect on the Moslem population.

For the Moslems, with their traditional intolerance toward other creeds, reacted to that cultural upsurge of the Christian Lebanon with suspicion and hatred. Unable to think but in religious terms, they saw in the awakening of the Lebanon just another piece of missionary infringement upon the Moslem population of Syria. Hence the anti-Christian riots in 1841, 1846, and the most bloody massacres of Damascus and the Lebanon in 1860, which took a toll of 11,000 lives. From the point of view of nationalism, those massacres had a far-reaching effect. For one thing, they resulted in according an autonomous status to the Lebanon under the so-called Reglement Organique of 1864. Although this privileged status of the Christian Lebanon could not but arouse envy among the Moslems, it nonetheless put in their minds the idea that something like that autonomy could eventually be applied to them, too. No wonder that the subsequent years witnessed some manifestations of national sentiments among the Moslems of Syria. Abdur-Rahman Kawakabi, a Moslem writer, preached emancipation of Syria and revival of an Arab caliphate. Some secret societies denounced Abdul-Hamid's tyranny by posting placards on the walls of Bairut, Damascus and other cities. But there was no national movement yet in existence, only sporadic manifestations of a negligible handful of individuals. And although one Najib Asuri founded in 1904 "La

Ligue de La Patrie Arabe" in Paris with the aim of freeing Syria and Iraq from Turkish domination, the movement made no substantial progress.

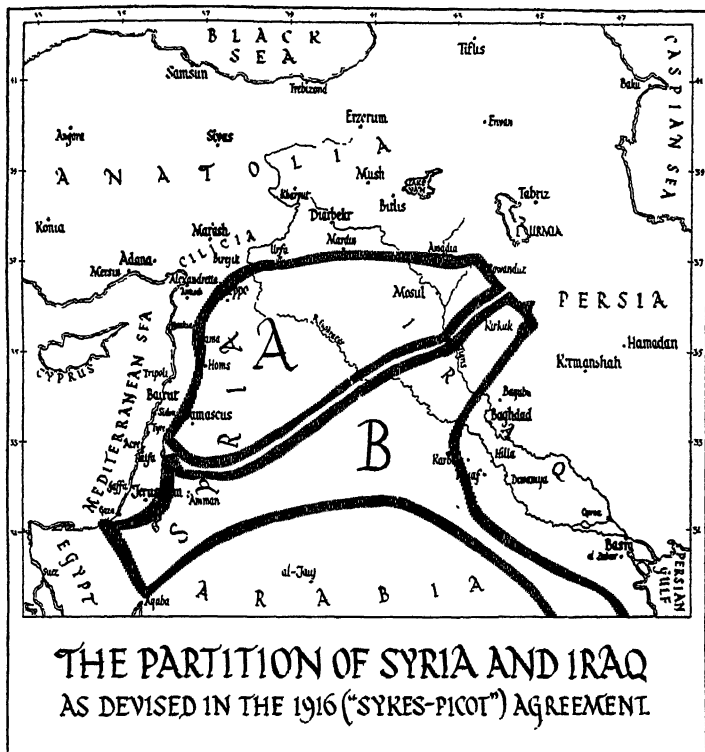
The revolution of the Young Turks marked a new rise of national feelings among the educated Arabs. Numerous secret societies came into being, among them the two most important, al-Qahtaniya and al-Fatat (Jamiyat-ar-Arabiya al Fatat — The Young Arab Society). Though clandestine, they were not revolutionary in that they did not strive for full independence of the Arab provinces, favoring collaboration with the Turks on the basis of national autonomy. The al-Qahtaniya's plan was a dual Turco-Arab monarchy with the Sultan as the King of the Arab provinces. The al-Fatat, founded in 1911 in Paris and transferred to Bairut and Damascus two years later, was the first political organization in Syria to embark upon a Pan-Arab program that aimed at the liberation of all Arab provinces from the Turkish yoke.

This aim, although somewhat obscure at the outset of World War I, became clear-cut in 1915, when Ahmad Jemal Pasha, military governor of Syria, on suspecting some Syrian leaders of plotting against the Ottoman Empire, imprisoned and executed certain members of the al-Fatat, as well as some other leading citizens of Damascus. Jemal Pasha's suspicion was not unfounded, for Abdullah and Faisal, the sons of Hussain, had been in contact with the Al-Fatat, whose members approved Hussain's negotiations with Sir Henry McMahon. But the al-Fatat, being a society of intellectuals whose number did not exceed two hundred, could not contribute a great deal to the Arab revolt which was carried out by the horsemen of the desert. The Syrian Arabs did not rise to throw off the Turkish yoke, but their national conscience did rise to a high pitch when Faisal triumphantly entered Damascus. There he must have been dreaming of a new Arab Empire which would revive the

glory of the Omayyads. Something great and exciting seemed to be within his grasp; he set up a provisional government and flew the flag of independence. A national congress, hurriedly summoned to Damascus on March 8, 1920, proclaimed Faisal as King of independent Syria. But soon the Syrians were to discover that all this was only a dream; neither kingdom nor independence was to become Syria's share, for on April 25, the Allied Council at San Remo decided to place Syria and the Lebanon under a French mandate. To the Arab nationalists this decision was a bolt out of the blue; they were resolved to offer armed resistance to the French troops who already were on the march to occupy Damascus. And although Faisal was willing to negotiate, a considerable force of Arabs clashed with the French columns at Khan Maisalun only to be utterly defeated. Faisal was compelled to flee the country, and thus another dream of Pan-Arab glory came to a sad end.

The very idea of a mandate for Syria and the Lebanon *eo ipso* barred a united Syria, and sufficed to arouse the anger of the Moslem Syrians, who sought to dominate their Christian neighbors. This anger was further aggravated by the appointment of France as the Mandatory Power, for the French were hated by the Moslem Syrians for a good many reasons, only to mention their policy of protecting the Christians and their iron-clad rule over the Moslem provinces in North Africa. This hatred coupled with a heap of grievances against French and British imperialism could not but augur stormy developments in Syria.

The mandatory regime, as established in accordance with Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant, is undoubtedly a highly humanitarian and progressive administrative system in comparison with the colonial regime. Though theoretically the mandates are by no means an offshoot of imperialism, practically, however, they have served well the interests of the Mandatory Powers. And it is those interests,



whether political, strategic or economic, that are responsible for establishing the mandatory systems in the Near East, including Syria. The Sykes-Picot agreement, which the Arab nationalists brand as a "shocking document," is but a manifestation of those interests. Concluded in May 1916, it divided the Arab speaking countries into two spheres of influence. The blue zone, including Syria, the vilayet of Mosul and Cilicia, was to be recognized as the French sphere of influence. Within this zone, the part of Syria to the east of the districts Aleppo, Hama, Homs and Damascus as well as the vilayet of Mosul, were earmarked for an

independent Arab state (A). The red zone, comprising the whole of Iraq, save the vilayet of Mossul, and Trans-Jordan, was claimed by the British with a view to protecting their overland road to India as well as to exploiting the oil wells of Kirkuk. Within this sphere, Trans-Jordan and the middle part of Mesopotamia were to become an Arab state (B). The western part of Palestine was to enjoy an inter-national administration. It is not our purpose to dwell upon details of the Sykes-Picot agreement. Nor shall we try to magnify, as many authors have done, the contradictions between this agreement and the McMahon pledges. The trend in both documents is the same. McMahon's reservations are bluntly evident in the Sykes-Picot agreement. And although this agreement had been declared void both by the British and the French on the ground that the third signatory, Russia, deserted the Allies before the war was over, the implication of French interests in Syria manifested itself in granting the mandate for Syria to the French. For France, more than any other power claimed "historical" rights to protect the Christians and other minorities in Syria.

From the point of view of their interests, and perhaps for the benefit of the minorities in Syria, the French mandate was justified. But the Syrian nationalists did not think so, for they resented the idea of mandate altogether and the French in particular. Of course, the French mandatory was not an ideal one, but the mandatory system in general could be very beneficial for a newly created state with no experience in administration, and with thorny problems. The aim of the mandate for Syria was "to facilitate the progressive development of Syria and the Lebanon as independent states." The road to that independence was to be encouragement of local autonomy "as far as circumstances permit." This clause, being very flexible, indeed, played into the hands of the French, who pursued a policy of divide-and-rule. With the religious-territorial differentiation

of Syria, this policy could be interpreted as a manifestation of true democracy in that it gave equal opportunities to all nationalities concerned.

Following this line, the French split Syria into four independent states: the State of Syria, with Damascus as capital, covered an area of 48,000 square miles with a population of 1,100,300. The Lebanese Republic, or Greater Lebanon, in an area of 3,800 square miles contained a population of 598,000. The government of Latakia on the coast, north of Lebanon, covered 2,800 square miles with a population of 279,000. The Government of Jabal-ad-Durus — 2,400 square miles, had a population of 51,000.* In addition, the sanjaq (district) of Alexandretta, on the Turkish border, was granted a special administration. This division was but the cantonization of Syria along religious lines. Syria proper was Sunni, Lebanon, Christian; Latakia, Alouite or Nusairi, a brand of Shi'itism; Jabal-ad-Durus, the country of believers in the return of the Fatimid caliph, Hakem.

As a matter of fact, those Lilliputian states, save Syria proper, welcomed this division. It well suited their local chiefs and their regional interests. But to the Arab nationalists in Damascus it was, naturally a severe blow. Not only were they stifled in their national aim to unite the whole country under Arab leadership, but what was worse still, Syria proper had been shut off from the Mediterranean Sea. No wonder, then, that the Arab nationalists had but one choice, namely, to fight the Mandatory Power in all ways until the mandate was revoked and Syria united.

The Arabic press in Syria, which witnessed a period of unusual upswing after the War, courageously led the ceaseless fight against the Mandatory Power. It called upon the Syrians to protest, demonstrate and rebel. The tone of the articles was fiery and exciting. Waves of demonstrations

* These figures are as of 1932.

surged the country in 1922, occasional riots broke out, and even an attempt on the life of the French High Commissioner was made. In 1925 a bloody revolt swept the country. It was initiated by the fearless Druzes, after the French had appointed Captain Carbillet as governor of Jabal-ad-Durus. Led by Sultan Pasha al Atrash, who resented the French being the ruler of his region, this revolt spread to Damascus and other towns. The Arab nationalists took this opportunity to influence their followers against French rule. So serious and bloody was this rebellion that the French had to call for their Senegalese and Moroccan troops, who succeeded in quelling the uprising after bitter street fighting and punitive expeditions in which tanks, mortars and planes were employed. Several months before the revolt was suppressed (August, 1926), the French had sent a new High Commissioner, Monsieur Ponsot, whose task was to open negotiations with the Arab leaders in the hope of establishing a constitutional government in Syria. Elections, in 1928, of representatives to a National Assembly resulted in an overwhelming victory of the Nationalists, but this Parliament was soon to be dissolved by the High Commissioner as it refused to draft a constitution within the framework of the Mandate.

After a long-deadlock, Monsieur Ponsot decided to hold new elections in 1933. Although the extreme nationalists failed to gain a majority, and the new government was inclined to compromise on a constitution which would please the Quai d'Orsay, the extremists under the leadership of Fakhri Bey Barudi put up such a tumult in the Chamber of Deputies that the High Commissioner again dissolved the Assembly.

While the French policy again hit a snag in the face of strong nationalistic opposition in Syria, Monsieur Ponsot was recalled to Paris and replaced by a strong man in the person of Comte de Martel. Comte de Martel, who

arrived in Bairut in December, 1933, ruled with an iron hand. Upon the rejection by the National Assembly of a new but unsatisfactory treaty submitted by the French government, the new High Commissioner suspended the Assembly and advised the Syrian government to concentrate on economic issues rather than to become stalled by politics. A short period of calm followed, but it was calm before a storm. At the outset of 1936, a press agitation as well as an underground campaign swept the country. Widespread memorial meetings held in Damascus, Homs, Aleppo and in other towns to honor deceased national leaders aimed to arouse the public against the Mandatory. De Martel acted swiftly by exiling and imprisoning the leaders as well as by clamping down on the press. The reaction of the nationalists was a wave of riots and a general strike which lasted six weeks. While French colonial troops were suppressing the riots, word came from Paris to the effect that the French Government was ready to conclude a treaty in accordance with the demands of the nationalistic bloc. A Syrian delegation went to Paris in March of 1936, and although the negotiations had been going on for months without bright prospects in sight, they finally resulted in a successful conclusion, thanks to the efforts of the new Government under the premiership of Leon Blum.

On September 9, 1936, a treaty of alliance between France and Syria was concluded. A similar treaty with the Republic of Lebanon came to pass on the 13th of November, 1936. Jamil Mirdam, the Prime Minister of the Syrian Republic, was happy to announce that the treaty implied complete independence of Syria. It provided the abrogation of the Mandate three years after the treaty had been ratified by the French Parliament. Latakia and Jabal-ad-Durus were to be integral parts of the independent Republic with some assurance of local autonomy. According to the treaty, the French acquired the right to air-bases in Syria

proper and to maintaining garrisons in the Lebanon for the entire period of the treaty whose duration was set for twenty-five years, renewable by mutual accord.

Thus a period of constant fight between the Syrian nationalists and the French came to an end. The extremists among the nationalists were far from being satisfied. Dr. Shabandar was one of them. They resented the fact that Lebanon was granted equal footing with boundaries detrimental to the integrity of Syria. The special administration granted to the Sanjaq of Alexandretta was another cause for dissatisfaction. And in fact, there developed a prickly Alexandretta question.

The district of Alexandretta, situated on the northern seaboard of Syria, is very fertile and possesses the finest bay in the Eastern Mediterranean. Of 220,000 inhabitants, 40% are Turks, the rest being Arabs, Kurds and other minorities. In the treaty of Lausanne, the Turks firmly opposed the inclusion of this territory into the mandated area of Syria. The French granted cultural autonomy to the Turkish population of the Sanjaq, but the Ankara government was far from being satisfied with that arrangement. The question, having been transferred to the League of Nations for settlement, was temporarily solved by granting a special status to the Sanjaq, under the control of the League of Nations. As a result of elections held in the Sanjaq, the Turks won a majority with a narrow margin. Faced with this fact and with the tense situation in the Mediterranean, the French concluded a pact of alliance with the Turks and made Syria foot the bill in that the entire Sanjaq was ceded to Turkey. Strong Turkish garrisons occupied this important area, to the astonishment of the Syrian nationalists. For it was a severe blow not only to the unity of Syria but also to her economic security. The most powerful result of that Turco-French transaction was the fact that Syria was left without an outlet to the sea.

And in addition, it provided the hereditary foes of the Arabs with valuable bases enabling them to strike effectively against the Syrian Republic in any event of Arab resistance.

Thus the wings of Pan-Arabia were clipped again, this time by the resolute Turks who certainly could not forget the Arab betrayal during World War I. The Syrian nationalists in their powerlessness were wise enough not to resist. In the meantime, the ratification of the treaty with France was delayed owing to the fall of Blum's cabinet as well as to the imminent threat of a world explosion. Nevertheless, the hard and thorny road toward Syrian independence was nearing its final lap. Not until September 27, 1941 and November 26, 1941, did General Georges Catroux proclaim the final independence of Syria and the Lebanon, respectively.

In their hard struggle for freedom, the Syrian nationalists have scored a remarkable victory. Despite the numerous grievances of the Arabs in Syria against the French rule, despite thousands of lives lost in fighting the Mandatory Power, Syrian independence has been gained in a relatively short time, and the sacrifices seem negligible in comparison with those of the small nations in Europe, who have been bleeding almost to death in their fight against mighty oppressors.

For all its faults and sins, French imperialism was the mightiest factor in steeling the will of the Nationalists in Syria. Moreover, whether or not we believe in the "white man's burden," it was the hated French who had established a modern school system in Syria; it was French engineers who built there excellent roads, hospitals and electric power-plants. Will Syria be able to make good use of those excellent roads? Will she be able to utilize the modern schools to educate a democratic generation and combat illiteracy which in 1932 ranged from 42% in Bairut

to 97% in al-Jazirah? Will she be able to solve satisfactorily the problem of her minorities?

These and other questions confront the Syrians in their struggle to make their independence a reality, for the future of Syria depends on building up their gained possessions rather than on indulging in political ventures as, for instance, the unreal dream of a "Greater Syria" which would also include the Lebanon, Palestine (or Southern Syria, according to Pan-Arab terminology) and Trans-Jordan. True, Damascus had a glorious past as the seat of a great Empire. But since then, many an empire has turned into ashes. Damascus of the Twentieth Century has yet to prove whether its masters will be able to put their country under such political, cultural and economic conditions as to fuse the heterogenous population into a democratic and self-conscious entity. Indeed, the failure of attaining such an objective may turn the cradle of Arab nationalism into its eventual graveyard.

8

The Floated of Iraq

Unlike Syria, whose road toward independence was hard, thorny and long, the post-war creation known as Iraq made rapid strides on the march toward freedom, being the first Arab State ever to be admitted to the League of Nations as a full-fledged member. This fact is all the more amazing since Iraq, or ancient Mesopotamia, was one of the most dormant of all Arab provinces in the Ottoman Empire as far as national or cultural awakening is concerned.

The very structure of Iraq, comprising the three vilayets of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul, bears witness to the fact that it was chiefly the pressure of the "Petroleum Imperial Policy Committee" and the strategic interests of the British Empire to safeguard the road and airways to India that made the British anxious to get the Mandate for this territory. First of all, it was the British who had liberated Iraq from the Turkish yoke; secondly, their troops remained stationed there after the war; consequently, having agreed to a French mandate in Syria as well as to some French share in the Mosul oil fields, the British found themselves firmly established in Iraq. From the McMahon correspondence and from the Sykes-Picot agreement, it is obvious that the British were not prone to see this area an independent Arab state. However, after the war they were soon to change their minds in the face of unexpected insurrections.

The harbingers of the Arab national movement in Iraq were a group of officers who after the war organized themselves in Damascus as the *Ahd al Iraqi*. Some of them were members of the original al Ahd, a similar society to

the al-Qahtaniya,* founded in 1914 by Aziz Ali al Masri, a major in the Turkish army. Those Iraqi officers at a conference held in 1920 at Damascus, styling themselves as the representatives of the Arab national movement of Mesopotamia, decided to follow the example of the Syrian Congress by resolving to proclaim Iraq as an independent Kingdom with Abdullah, Faisal's brother, as King. Soon afterwards, as the news about placing Iraq under a mandate reached Baghdad, the whole country began to seethe with unrest. To provoke a conflagration in this part of the world was a relatively easy job. The fanatic and warlike tribes of the Middle Euphrates have ever been ready to use their arms against anybody; this time, particularly, when their Shi'ite *mujtahids*,** harping on jihad-strings, were calling the believers to fight the infidel British. Such propaganda disseminating from the Shi'ite shrines of Najf and Karbala brought immediate results, as the tribes instinctively hated any rule, and non-Moslem rule, in particular. The fearless and freedom-loving Kurds in the Mosul area were itching for a fight, too. Under those circumstances, hundreds of Turkish ex-officers found it not difficult to organize a most violent rebellion for which the British were not prepared. So alarming was the murderous upswing of the insurrection, that the British were compelled to call for considerable reinforcements with heavy guns and bombers to fight the rebels, who managed to hold out for six months.

The enormous toll of British casualties evoked widespread repercussions among the British people, exhorting the Government to act fast. In October, 1920, Sir Percy Cox arrived in Iraq with the aim of setting up a civil administration. Within a short time he succeeded in assembling a provisional government composed of the Naqib of Baghdad and some other notables. In the meantime, Winston Church-

* See page 81.

** Moslem scholars well versed in theology.

ill, then British Secretary for Colonies, at the famous conference in Cairo in 1921, made some important decisions regarding the future of the Arab countries. Among others, it was resolved, upon the advice of T. E. Lawrence, to offer the throne of Iraq to Faisal, who had been expelled by the French. His brother, Abdullah, too, was rewarded for serving "the cause" of the Arab revolt. With a view to keeping Abdullah in line, for he was planning a "march" against the French in Syria, Churchill appointed him Amir of Trans-Jordan. Thus the British devised a clever solution aimed, on one hand, to reward the Hashimites for their services during the war, and on the other, to play fair with the French in Syria by appeasing the offended and ill-treated Faisal.

The Iraqi notables, however, had their own plans. Naturally, they welcomed the idea of an Iraqi Kingdom, but they preferred a candidate of their own, namely, Ta'lib Pasha, the son of the *naqib* (governor) of Basra, for Faisal, being both a Sunnite and outsider, was not very popular in predominantly Shi'ite Iraq. But despite all this, Faisal was enthroned in Baghdad after Ta'lib Pasha had been forced in a kid-glove-manner to leave Iraq for Ceylon. With the advent of Faisal to the throne, which took place on the 23rd of October, 1921, the British began building up an Iraqi administration as well as laying plans for a constitution of Iraq.

But in so doing they encountered serious difficulties on the part of the nationalistic parties that came into being after the uprising. Two parties particularly, the Hizb al Watani (The Fatherland-Party) under the leadership of Ja'far Abu Timman, and the Hizb al-Nadhbah (Revival Party), with Muhammad Sadr at the top, strongly opposed any agreement with the British on the basis of the mandate. Minor troubles broke out again in 1922, whereupon the British

suppressed both parties, allowing only the collaborationist Hizb al Hurr (Party of Freedom) to gather strength.

With the aid of Faisal, who had revealed himself as a clever and flexible ruler, the British had a relatively smooth sailing in the stormy sea of Iraqi politics. From 1922 to 1930 they concluded four different treaties which gradually led to the abolition of the mandate. Those eight years marked a period of constant struggle between the ever growing nationalist parties and the British who, though reluctantly, had to give up step by step their administrative control over the country. King Faisal successfully kept the balance, caught between the nationalist hammer and the British anvil. Stormy scenes, followed by political crises, were commonplace in the Iraqi constitutional, or quasi-constitutional, assemblies, for ever since 1924, Iraq had a constitution which provided for a limited monarchy, a responsible government and a two-chamber parliament. Those institutions, however, being something new to the Iraqis, had to prove their feasibility. But as far as their political endeavor is concerned, it was crowned with an unusual success in the treaty of June 30, 1930, whose implication was complete independence of Iraq.

This treaty, durable for twenty-five years, provided for an alliance between Great Britain and an independent Iraq. Except for matters of foreign policy, in which the government at Baghdad was obliged to consult the British, Iraq was to become fully independent. In time of war, both parties were obligated to mutual assistance. Great Britain was granted the right to use certain bases for the Royal Air Force as well as the roads and communication facilities. Iraq, in turn, was to benefit from a British military mission charged with the task of building up the Iraqi army. Only two years were to elapse before Iraq was admitted to membership of the League of Nations. Thus on

the 3rd of October, 1932, Iraq became free of the mandate, its period of acquiring political maturity having been reduced to ten years. And though the Permanent Mandates Commission, while considering the case of Iraq's admission into the League, was somewhat dubious as to the ability of Iraq to manage itself, it nevertheless accepted the British suggestion to terminate the mandate.

The dubiousness of the Mandate Commission was not unfounded, for in comparison with Egypt, which was then under British protectorate, and Syria under a French mandate, Iraq lagged scores of years behind, culturally, politically and socially. And yet the British arrived at an odd conclusion that Iraq within a period of ten years had succeeded in discarding its backwardness, although the illiteracy of the Iraqis ran as high as 95%, thus outmatching their Syrian and Egyptian neighbors. Undoubtedly, the British were well aware of the fact that the Iraqis had learned very little progressiveness in a short space of one decade; yet they eschewed the prospect of having trouble in the land flowing with streams of precious oil. Therein lies their acquiescence to exchange the mandate for an alliance with a limited political and economic control.

Now that the mandate was terminated, and the chief impediment to Mesopotamian happiness had been removed, an era of prosperity and consolidation ought to have begun by all means; but it did not. As long as the diversive elements which made up the Iraqi state had buried their hatchets in the common fight against the "infidel" British, the real issues confronting the government of Baghdad could not come into the foreground. But, once the reins of the administration were taken over by the natives, the proverbial instability of Iraq immediately made itself felt. In fairness to the British, it must be said that they had done all in their power to advise and to assist materially in building up all branches of the new administration. However,

no longer responsible for the affairs of the state, except for the foreign policy, they could do little to bridge the internal rifts within the borders of Iraq. And rifts there were, and numerous.

First, the religious and racial minorities constituted a grave problem. Out of a population numbering 3,000,000 there were about 1,200,000 non-Arabs. The nearly 530,000 Kurds in the Mosul district, although Sunni Moslems, have preserved their racial and linguistic distinctions and looked askance at the dominant Arabs. In addition, they have not ceased dreaming of uniting with their brothers across the frontier to form an independent Kurdish state. The 250,000 Turks and 240,000 Persians were anything but a stabilizing factor in Iraq. The 90,000 Jews did not present any worry to independent Iraq, but as a target for trouble-shooters, as in any other country, they, too, marred the Pan-Arab designs of some nationalist leaders. However, the Christian "Assyrians," numbering about 40,000, caused a great deal of trouble. Warlike and freedom loving, they would not meekly submit to the harsh orders of Baghdad. Having failed to achieve some grade of autonomy, they were compelled to resist. Consequently the Assyrian problem was solved in a Nazi way, by merciless slaughter of many thousands. Those horrible massacres of the Assyrians, as the first sign of Iraqi political maturity (1933), aroused such a storm all over the world that the Arabs themselves found it extremely hard to whitewash their hands from that ignominious feat. Even such an Arab nationalist as George Antonius* had to admit that "the massacre which took place is a shameful blot on the pages of Arab history."

Second, the bellicose tribes of the Middle Euphrates, with their patriarchal system and lack of sedentary traditions, did not fit into the structure of Iraq. To them their own chief was the highest authority; consequently, a decree

* George Antonius, *Arab Awakening*, p. 367.

from Baghdad did not mean much. Nor were those parliamentary innovations of the Iraqi state of any significance to them. Taxes, demarcation of boundaries, or obedience to a central authority "up there in Baghdad" were meaningless terms. Hence the government has always been confronted with a pacification problem regarding those tribesmen.

Third, the Shi'ite majority of the population resented being ruled by the Sunni minority, a fact which put the ruling house of the Hashimites in an unfavorable position.

Besides, various pressure-groups made the process of stability in Iraq very difficult. There were the rich beys, or effendis, who owned enormous stretches of land; their interests and those of the wealthy merchants and loan-sharks ran counter to the interests of the common people, who as a rule are kept in ignorance. The few political parties are almost in infancy, representing rather cliques than creative ideas and popular movements, for universal suffrage in this semi-feudal land is unknown. Neither constituency nor membership, those pillars on which Western democracy rests, represents the foundations of the Iraqi political parties. One of the two major parties, that headed by Nuri as Sa'id Pasha and called the "Progressive," is in fact very little progressive, being Arab nationalist with strong Pan-Arab leanings. The other is the "Nationalist Party," whose real aim, while under the late Yassin Pasha, was to safeguard the interests of a small clique, who publicly assumed the role of champions for extreme nationalism. The liberal or the "Reform Party" seemed to have a truly progressive program based on social reforms of high significance, but could marshal only a handful of intellectuals. And last, but not least, came the Army, built up and equipped by the British, the army which took a too active part in politics before it had a chance to display its valor on the battleground. Soon the army became a hornets' nest

of political intrigues. Confronted with such a whirl of forces, the Iraqi government found it difficult, indeed, to steer safely. Within a period of twelve years, King Faisal saw twelve new cabinets coming and going. Needless to say that under such circumstances there was little chance for constructive work. The situation became much worse when, after King Faisal's mysterious death in Switzerland, in 1933, his high-strung son, Ghazi, ascended the throne. During his reign, which lasted less than six years, nine cabinets ruled the country.

That the parliamentary system was but a mockery and democracy a vague term, had been demonstrated in October, 1936, as Baqir Sidqi, Chief of Staff and "hero" of the campaign against the "Assyrians," staged a bloody coup d'état which secured for Hikmat Sulaiman the premiership. One of the Faisal-trio, Ja'far Pasha, paid with his life, while Yassin Pasha the Premier, and Nuri as-Sa'id, were lucky enough to escape.

Hikmat Sulaiman and the members of his new cabinet, all liberals and imbued with progressive ideas, really embarked upon a daring plan of far-reaching social reforms to the benefit and welfare of the common people. Among other things, they laid plans for increasing the number of schools so as to combat the horrible rate of illiteracy; new hospitals, bridges, modern apartments and other facilities, so urgently needed for any democracy in the making, were to be built. They even planned a land-reform whereby the immense estates of the rich land-owners were to be parceled among the exploited peasants. Also investigations were initiated against certain members of the previous cabinets who had unscrupulously used their offices to enrich themselves and their close friends. In its foreign policy, the new government vigorously defied all Pan-Arab tendencies, stressing their friendly relations with Turkey.

This bold program struck horror among the effendis, the extreme nationalists and the Pan-Arab dreamers. Baqir Sidqi, too, denounced certain members of the new cabinet as communists, for he was chiefly interested in building up the army and becoming the dictator of Iraq. Soon the cabinet was reshuffled, and although Hikmat Sulaiman remained at the helm, his premiership depended solely upon the whims of Baqir Sidqi, who was planning to dissolve the parliament altogether. Being Kurdish, Baqir Sidqi increased the apprehension of the nationalist elements all the more. In addition, rumors were circulated to the effect that he had been in the pay of some foreign power. The followers of the exiled leaders stood on guard, and as a result of their scheming, Baqir Sidqi was assassinated by an Arab officer.

This act occurred on the 16th day of October 1937, as the would-be dictator and his aide, Muhammad Ali Jawwad, were about to take off for military maneuvers in Turkey and Germany. What part, if any, the British played in the fateful event, is hard to say. Unquestionably, they were not displeased at Baqir Sidqi's death. Much emphasis had been placed in the news dispatches on the detail that a check drawn to an Italian bank had been found in the pocket of the Iraqi Chief of Staff. Hikmat Salaiman, trying to get at the bottom of this conspiracy, was confronted with an open revolt of the Commander of the Mosul division, whereupon he decided to resign in order to avoid further bloodshed.

Jamil Madfa'i, an opponent of Nuri Pasha, was appointed premier. He did not belong to the close circle of Faisal's men who fostered Pan-Arab ideas. One time condemned to death by the British as one of the instigators of the Iraqi rebellion in 1920, he fled the country, but after several years he managed to return to Iraq, where he succeeded in gaining prominence as a clever politician. Upon assuming the

premiership following Baqir Sidqi's assassination, Jamil Madfa'i was regarded by the British as a "moderate," this term apparently connoting a middle-of-the-roader who was opposed both to the Pan-Arab Nuri-as-Sa'id and to the militaristic Baqir Sidqi. But this moderateness could not keep him in office for a long time. Nor did he buttress his position by declaring that he would keep the army out of politics, for the army officers, once plunged into the political caldron of their country, could not but continue their hazardous ventures.

No doubt, the shots that were fired upon Baqir Sidqi sprang from within an organized clique. It was the same group of army officers who did not favor Jamil Madfa'i and were looking for an opportunity to depose him. After Nuri Sa'id returned from exile with his retinue, those officers staged a bloodless coup which elevated Nuri-as-Sa'id to the premiership on the 25th of December, 1938.

But this new venture of the military men was far from bringing peace and stabilization to the country, because the Military Staff of the Iraqi Army, as we shall see in the subsequent chapters, was an abode of dangerous intrigues with far-reaching consequences. The army chiefs despised Nuri Pasha for his pro-British orientation, and backed by foreign powers had tried on March 21, 1939 to oust that staunch champion of Faisal's ideas. True, Nuri Pasha succeeded in nipping that impending coup in the bud, but his office remained resting on a powder keg.

Another bad omen for the inner tottering of Iraq appeared on the political horizon when King Ghazi was killed on April 4, 1939, as a result of a motorcycle accident. And though King Ghazi during his short reign had enjoyed motorcycle racing rather than running the affairs of the State, his accidental death had a fateful bearing on the future developments of Iraq. The mere fact that his six year old son, Faisal, ascended the throne with his ma-

ternal uncle Amir Abdul-Ilah as regent, sufficed to excite the tense atmosphere of Baghdad. Thus, on the eve of World War II, the state of affairs in Iraq was highly explosive. This newly created state, that had been the first of the Arab speaking countries to discard the mandate, seemed to fail miserably in reaping the fruits of its freedom. Torn with constant strifes between diverse elements of its heterogeneous populace and subjected to power politics of emotional politicians and harmful ventures of military cliques, Iraq and its common people in particular, had gained nothing from the blessings of nationalism which was supposed to bring them cultural, social and economic advantages.

Mesopotamia, the alleged Biblical site of Eden, could have been turned into a modern Paradise for a relatively small population whose number does not exceed 3,200,000. The rich oil fields of Kirkuk and Khanaqin with an output of about 12,000,000 barrels (eighth in world production), and the vast fields of cotton are but two sources of Iraq's potential prosperity. Irrigation schemes, if carried out after the Palestinian pattern, would make the Iraqi peasants and shepherds the most prosperous in the world. But instead, they are serfs to their feudal lords. They live in filthy tents and rotten huts, often being exposed to untold greed of the usurers. The fact that the unskilled laborer in 1939 earned between 40 to 60 mils a day (25c) is sufficient proof of their low standard of living. They are kept in ignorance and illiteracy, just as are the rest of the population. Instead of providing the common people with good hospitals, numerous schools, habitable apartments, industrial enterprises and decent working conditions, the Iraqi politicians, especially those of Nuri Sa'id's school, are feeding their ignorant flock with Pan-Arab stuff or other political slogans which aim only at distracting the attention of the Iraqis from the real issues on the home front. The political mania of the

Iraqi leaders who are always looking beyond their borders toward Syria, Palestine and elsewhere, for some excitement, is chiefly responsible for the utter failure in consolidating their home front as well as in stabilizing the permanent unrest at home. Small wonder then that Nuri Pasha was apprehensively looking toward the future as black clouds were approaching the Near East in 1939. It was the year in which World War II broke out. It was the year in which the British Government issued its White Paper for Palestine, a document which almost nullified the Balfour Declaration and spelled further trouble for the explosive Middle East.

9

Palestine, The Holy Land of Unholy Machinations

The issuance of the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917, which provided for establishing a Jewish National Home in Palestine, excluded the Holy Land from the realm of Arab national aspirations. What the British government, backed by France, the United States and other nations, contemplated by "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" was explicitly elucidated in numerous statements issued by such high ranking exponents of Allied policy as Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George, Lord Balfour, Winston Churchill and many others. Lloyd George, British Prime Minister, 1916-1922, declared plainly that "It was contemplated that when the time arrived for according representative institutions to Palestine, if the Jews had meanwhile responded to the opportunity afforded them by the idea of a National Home and had become a definite majority of the inhabitants, then Palestine would thus become a Jewish Commonwealth."

On February 8, 1920, Winston Churchill stated "If as may well happen, there should be created in our own lifetime by the banks of the Jordan a Jewish State, under the protection of the British Crown, which might comprise three or four millions of Jews, an event will have occurred in the history of the world which would be especially in harmony with the truest interests of the British Empire."

In the same vein declared President Wilson, "I am persuaded that the Allied Nations, with the fullest concurrence of our Government and our people, are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish Commonwealth."

A large number of similar statements could easily be quoted, proving unmistakably that it was the intent of Allied policy, as implied in the Balfour Declaration, to create a Jewish State, or Commonwealth, in Palestine.

Jewish rule of Palestine not only was contemplated by the British but fitted well into the schemes of the Arab spokesmen in those years of 1916-1920, when all-Arab national aspirations were about to be realized. Hussain, who regarded himself as the champion of Pan-Arab independence, in an article in the *al-Qibla* of Mecca, welcomed the return of the Jews to Palestine. This article, published on March 23, 1918, long after the Balfour Declaration was officially announced and widely publicized, speaks of the "return of the exiles" and makes it clear that Palestine was "for its original sons, for all their differences, a sacred and beloved homeland."

More explicit was a statement made by the Syrian Commission that appeared before the Allied Supreme Council on February 13, 1919. Led by Chekir Ghanem and Jamil Mardam Bey, it expressed the wish of the Syrians not to be incorporated into a Pan-Arab State, for—as the Syrians argued—their cultural and political development would hinder any merger with the backward provinces whose interests Hussain was to represent at the Peace Conference. It is noteworthy that the concept of Palestine (or, as they called it, "Southern Syria") as a Jewish National Home was welcomed by those spokesmen for Syrian independence. They declared, "We have suffered too much from suffering resembling theirs, not to throw open wide to them the doors of Palestine. . . . If they, the Jews, form the majority there, they will be the rulers."

Those Arab sentiments favoring Jewish rule in Palestine were more emphatically expressed on many occasions by Amir Faisal, who headed an Arab delegation to the Peace Conference. In a letter to Felix Frankfurter, Faisal wrote: "We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement."*** "We are working together for a reformed and revived Near East, and our two movements complete one another. The Jewish movement is nationalist and not imperialist."

This spirit of Arab-Jewish cooperation on the basis of mutual respect for one another's national aspirations, as expressed by Faisal, was embodied in a formal agreement between Amir Faisal, representing the Kingdom of Hejaz and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, representing the World Zionist Organization. This agreement, concluded on the 3rd of January, 1919, provides for close collaboration between the Arab State and Palestine on the basis of the Balfour Declaration; it calls for Jewish immigration "on a large scale" and obligates the Zionist Organizations "to assist the Arab State in providing the means for developing the natural resources and announce possibilities thereof." (Article VII). It does not, however, in any way mention or suggest *national* aspirations on the part of the Palestinian Arabs, while it does make the reservation in Article VI that "The Mohammedan Holy Places shall be under Mohammedan control." The enactment of this treaty, however, was conditioned upon the granting by the Peace Conference, of independence to Syria and Iraq which, in addition to Hejaz, were to form the "Arab State" or a federation of states as envisaged by the Hashimite family.

But since Faisal was driven out of Syria, and both Syria and Iraq were placed under a mandate, Faisal considered the agreement void. Notwithstanding the fate of the agreement, it proves beyond all doubt that the Arab leaders acquiesced to the exclusion of Palestine from the realm

of Arab independence. It is all the more significant that such Pan-Arab leaders as Nuri as-Sa'id, Rustum Haidar, and Auni Bey Abdul Hadi, a Palestinian Arab, who appeared with Faisal before the Council of Five on February 6th, 1919, likewise agreed to the exclusion of Palestine from the all-Arab scheme.

The fact that this heyday of Arab-Jewish understanding was so brief, proved detrimental to Arabs, Jews and British alike. The grievances of the Arabs in Syria and in Iraq against the French and the British, respectively, made the Arab leaders change their attitude toward the policy of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. In so doing they suddenly "discovered" that McMahon's pledge implied the inclusion of Palestine in the territory in which independence was promised the Arabs. Although Palestine was not mentioned in the "pledge," and there was nothing in it to substantiate such a claim, the Arabs kept on clinging to their view tenaciously; and when the Arab leaders, trying to counter-balance the Balfour Declaration in Palestine, began referring to McMahon's correspondence as to a legal document supporting their claim to the Holy Land, Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for Colonies, stated emphatically in the House of Commons on July 11, 1922, "No pledges were made to the Palestine Arabs in 1915. . . . I am quite satisfied that it was as fully the intention of His Majesty's Government to exclude Palestine from the area of Arab Independence, as it was to exclude the more northern tracts of Syria." But the Arabs did not take this statement at its face value. They clamored more vociferously for recognition of the alleged pledge made by Sir Henry McMahon until McMahon himself felt it necessary to put an end to those senseless diatribes concerning facts known better to him than any one else. On July 25, 1937, McMahon made a statement in the London Times which reads as follows:

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

"Sir, many references have been made in the Palestine Royal Commission Report and in the course of recent debates in both Houses of Parliament to the 'McMahon Pledge,' especially to that portion of the pledge which concerns Palestine and of which one interpretation has been claimed by the Jews and another by the Arabs.

"It has been suggested to me that continued silence on the part of the giver of that pledge may itself be misunderstood. I feel, therefore, called upon to make some statement on the subject, but I will confine myself in doing so to the point now at issue, — i.e., whether that portion of Syria now known as Palestine was or was not intended to be included in the territories in which the independence of the Arabs was guaranteed in my pledge.

"I feel it my duty to state, and I do so definitely and emphatically, that it was not intended by me in giving this pledge to King Hussain to include Palestine in the area in which Arab independence was promised.

"I also had every reason to believe at the time that the fact that Palestine was not included in my pledge was well understood by King Hussain.

"Yours faithfully,

"A. Henry McMahon

"5 Wilton Place, s.w.l., July 22."

The *a posteriori* character of the Arab claims concerning Palestine, was likewise confirmed by Colonel C. E. Vickery, who after an interview with Hussain in 1920, thus formulated the Sharif's opinion: "He (Hussain) stated most emphatically that he did not concern himself at all with Palestine and had no desire to have suzerainty over it for him or his successors" (London Times, February 21, 1939). This dispute whether or not Palestine was excluded from the area of Arab independence, was finally closed by the British Government in March, 1939, after a special com-

mission composed of Arabs and British had thoroughly examined McMahon's "phrase." The conclusion was that Palestine had been definitely *excluded* from the realm of Arab aspirations (See page 58).

It was the Balfour Declaration which provided the basis for the mandatory regime approved by the League of Nations in July 1922. The Mandate for Palestine, which was formally endorsed by fifty-two nations, definitely precluded any national aspirations on the part of the Arabs in Palestine. By recognizing the "historical connection" of the Jewish people with Palestine, as well as by according them the right to *reconstitute* their National Home there, those fifty-two nations *eo ipso* recognized eventual Jewish rule in the Holy Land. What is more significant, neither in the Balfour Declarations nor throughout all the articles of the Mandate, is the word "Arab" mentioned. The Mandate speaks of safeguarding the *civil* and *religious* rights of the non-Jewish population, but not once does it refer to any political rights of the Arabs. The *primary* obligation of the Mandatory Power was to secure the establishment of a Jewish National Home by facilitating Jewish immigration and settlement on the land, as well as by creating all other conditions necessary for achieving this end. All subsequent talk of the "dual purpose" or "dual obligations" in the Mandatae, simply reflected a changed British policy.

The unequivocal meaning of the Palestine Mandate was well understood by a handful of self-styled Arab leaders in Palestine who took it upon themselves to combat the idea of a Jewish National Home. Yes, there was only a negligible handful of those leaders, and self-styled they were, indeed. For there was only a slight trace of Arab nationalism in Palestine during World War I, or shortly thereafter. As a matter of fact, Palestine has never figured in Arab history as a political or cultural center. Syria had its *al-Fatat*, Iraq its *al-Ahd*, but Palestine did not have a

single society with nationalist aims. The Arabs of Palestine fought on the Turkish side. There was a Jewish secret society "Nili," whose members smuggled out valuable information to General Allenby; there were three Jewish battalions fighting with the Allies, but there was nothing of that kind among the Palestinian Arabs. The Jewish community in Palestine, although numbering only 90,000 as against the 600,000 Arabs, constituted the only progressive, educated and nationalist elements in the Holy Land. Imbued with the Zionist idea of Dr. Theodor Herzl, they returned to their desolate Homeland as peaceful settlers and regarded themselves as the vanguard of the millions of their unhappy brothers who, too, were due to return from the Diaspora.

The opposition to Jewish aspirations did not come from the mass of common Arabs. The bulk of the Arab population consisted of peasants, or fellaheen, who were poor and illiterate. Being mostly tenants of their feudal lords, or effendis, they hardly maintained themselves and their families. Primitive methods of cultivation and lack of irrigation facilities resulted in very poor crops. Burdensome taxation and loans contracted at a twenty-five per cent interest rate from unscrupulous usurers made their lot still worse. The fellaheen learned modern ways of cultivation from the Jewish settlers and found employment in their settlements.

It was the wealthy landowners from whose midst sprang opposition to the Jewish National Home. Most of them had enjoyed considerable esteem under Turkish rule and kept high positions in the administration of the country. With the establishment of the mandatory regime, those effendis joined hands with some minor ex-Turkish officials who found themselves jobless as a result of the new order. Both were hostile to the Mandate, for the educated and democratic Jews, who were streaming into the land "as of

right and not on sufferance," represented a real threat to their domination. They were painfully aware of the fact that with the progress of Western ideas in this backward land they no longer would be able to exploit the fellaheen or keep them in ignorance or submission. They convened a poorly attended meeting at Haifa on December 13, 1920, and declared themselves the leadership of the Arabs in Palestine, henceforth known as the Arab Executive. Musa Kasim Pasha al Hussaini, one of the wealthiest effendis and former *qaimaqam* (governor) of Jaffa, served as president of this Executive until his death in 1934. He had been appointed Mayor of Jerusalem by the British in 1917, but was dismissed two years later on the ground of agitation against the British authorities. His place was taken by Raghav Bey Nashashibi, another prominent effendi of the wealthy Nashashibi family, the hereditary foes of the Hus-sainis. Thus the old feud of those two plutocratic families gained new momentum with far-reaching consequences for Arab politics in Palestine.

The policy of the Arab Executive was one of non-cooperation with the British as long as the Mandate was in effect. The opposition of those few leaders to the Jewish National Home would undoubtedly have subsided, had it not been for the unfriendly attitude of the Mandatory Administration itself toward the very idea to which it owed its existence. But, as British officials in Palestine did not take the implications of the Mandate seriously enough, Arab leaders grew ever bolder in defying the Mandate. They manifested this policy of theirs in various memoranda submitted to the British Colonial Office and to the League of Nations. On the home front, they failed to arouse nationalist consciousness among the common people. Except for several scores of intellectuals and a few hundred merchants, who as a rising middle class saw the Jews as their competitors, the Arab leadership was unable to

organize large parts of the Arab population. This inability was partly due to the lack of a positive program, partly to the cultural and social backwardness of the Arabs, as well as to their political indifference, and not less to the nature of Arab politics in Palestine, which was dominated by the special interests of particular families rather than by a national idea springing from within the masses.

From behind the scenes of Arab politics in Palestine there emerged a man who had his own ideas on how to shake the political lethargy of his fellow Arabs. He did not believe that cultural and educational methods were the proper ways of arousing national consciousness among the Arabs. Nor did he believe in mere protests or memoranda as effective political weapons against the mandatory regime. Fanning religious fanaticism and appealing to bloodshed and riots would serve to raise the nationalist temperature and gradually crack the foundations of the mandatory structure. So reasoned Haj Amin al Hussani, member of the Hussaini family, who in 1920, at the age of twenty-seven embarked on his political career as an able instigator of the first anti-Jewish riots in Palestine. Sentenced by the British military authorities to a prison term of ten years, he nevertheless managed to ascend the highest religious and political pedestal.

In 1921, Sir Herbert Samuel, trying to appease the Arab rioters, appointed Haj Amin as Mufti of Jerusalem. This appointment was certainly an unexpected and excessive honor for a young ex-sergeant of the Turkish Army. But he was soon to be vested with an even higher office, when the same High Commissioner named him head of the Supreme Moslem Council. He was thereby given authority to appoint local muftis and qadis* as well as to wield control over the ample funds of the *Waqf*, the charitable and religious foundations. Haj Amin shrewdly used his relig-

* Religious judges.

ious offices for his political ends. While his agents were building up a strong pro-Mufti group within the Arab Executive—a task which was relatively easy, for the Hussaini family controlled this body—Haj Amin himself was carefully watching the incipient results of his blood-and-riot formula. The anti-Jewish riots in 1920-1921, though insignificant in scope, succeeded in bringing about a change in British policy in favor of the Arabs. This change manifested itself in carving out of Palestine the whole territory of Transjordan, an area of about 35,000 square miles, over three times as large as Western Palestine. Thus the original territory of the Jewish National Home shrank from 46,000 square miles to 10,450 square miles.

Secondly, along with this territorial shrinkage of the Jewish National Home, there came further restrictions upon the growth of the Jewish National Home within the borders of Western Palestine. As a result of Sir Herbert Samuel's appeasement policy, the so-called Churchill White Paper was issued on June 3, 1922, which, though admitting that the Jews are in Palestine "as of right and not of sufferance," restricted Jewish immigration into the land to "the economic capacity of the country to absorb new arrivals." Moreover, it assured the Arabs that "the terms of the Declaration do not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but such a home should be founded in Palestine."

This statement was in line with Sir Herbert Samuel's naive idea of a bi-national state in Palestine, for he believed that such a concession to the Arabs would influence the Arab leaders to change their hostile attitude toward the Jews. But notwithstanding those concessions which placed Transjordan under Arab rule and put a straight jacket on the curtailed National Home in Western Palestine, the Arab leaders refused to cooperate with the mandatory power, their primary demand being the revocation of the

Balfour Declaration. Not only did appeasement not work but it even emboldened the Mufti-clique to further application of their blood-and-riot-formula. Haj Amin's vehement agitation in 1929, which was blended with alarming rumors that the Jews were about to attack the mosque of Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, again produced bloody results. In widespread attacks about 150 Jews were killed.

And again the Jews were penalized. A commission with Sir Walter Shaw was dispatched to Palestine to investigate the causes of the riots. On the ground of this report, which recommended further curtailment of Jewish immigration and restrictions on land purchase by Jews, the British Government issued the so-called "Passfield White Paper," which, among other things, stated that "The Jewish National Home is not meant to be the principal feature of the Mandate." This obvious repudiation of the Mandate caused such a vehement stir in the British Parliament as well as in the whole civilized world that the British Prime Minister, Ramsey MacDonald, was obliged to issue a new statement, in the form of a public letter addressed to Dr. Chaim Weizmann, which sought to mitigate the drastically anti-Jewish policies of the Passfield White Paper.

Having succeeded in bringing about the initial break in the mandatory structure, the Mufti called a Pan-Islamic Congress in Jerusalem in 1931 with a view to gaining the limelight in the Moslem World. Simultaneously he made all efforts to build up a political party by means of which he would be able to rise to supreme leadership of the Arabs. The opportune moment came in 1934 when, following the death of Musa Kasim Pasha, the Arab Executive fell to pieces. Haj Amin assembled his family and brought into being the "Palestine Arab Party" with his nephew, Jamal Al-Hussaini as head. The political program of this Mufti-party was most boldly defined in one of the articles in their party organ *al-Liwa* (The Banner). It read simply:

"To push the British and the Jews into the sea." In Western terms, it meant revocation of the Mandate and expulsion or extermination of all Jews who came to Palestine after World War I. To prove that the Christian Arabs also endorsed his policy, Haj Amin won over a Roman Catholic plutocrat by the name of Alfred Rock.

The Nashahibis viewed with grave alarm the growing might of their rivals, the Hussainis, who also succeeded in defeating Ragheb Bey in the election for mayor of Jerusalem in 1934. This defeat stimulated Ragheb Bey to act fast. He, too, convened the members of his family and formed the "National Defense Party." Moreover, he scored some success in trying to broaden his party beyond his next of kin. The mayors of Jaffa, Ramleh and Nablus, as well as some Greek Orthodox Christians joined his party. The latter contributed a great deal to the Nashashibi's cause by placing at their disposal the daily *Falastin*. Although the Defense Party declared itself for "the independence of Palestine with full Arab sovereignty," its leaders were, nevertheless, inclined to a measure of compromise with the British and the Jews.

As against those two most influential groups, there was the first non-family party *Istiqlal* (Independence) organized in 1932 by one of the ablest and most dynamic speakers among the Arabs, Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi. As a former member of the al-Fatat (See p. 81), Auni Bey based his party on a Pan-Arab program. In his newspaper *ad-Difa'* (self-defense) he attacked the Arab leaders for their constant quarreling and smugness; but his most violent outpourings were directed against the British who, in his opinion, were the real enemies of the Arabs. He called his fellow Arabs to fight the British who, in his opinion, were more dangerous than the Jews. His ultimate goal was an independent Arab Palestine as a member of an Arab Federation. Auni Bey failed to gain a large following and had

to content himself with a handful of intellectuals and a small number of youths. As early as 1933 his party weakened, for some Istiqlalists, true to their master's principles, staged unsuccessful attacks on the British, only to be nipped in the bud.

The jealousies and petty ambitions of the Arab leaders occasioned the creation of some other minor parties. The new mayor of Jerusalem, Dr. Hussain al-Khaldi, following a quarrel with Ragheb Bey, formed his own party, the so-called "Reform Party" (al-Islah). In what the reform lay was never known. Its influence was negligible. Still another party, known as the "National Bloc" and founded by Abdul-Latif-as-Salah from Nablus, likewise failed to gain any followers or prominence.

All those parties were confined to the urban population, while the peasantry as a rule remained apathetic. There was, however, a nascent element which, if properly educated, could have played a vital role in fostering Arab nationalism in Palestine: the new generation that grew up in the Arab schools, established and maintained by the Mandatory Power. The trend of education in those schools was marked by religious fanaticism and intolerance toward the British and the Jews. This education of hatred, coupled with the predominant influence of the street, which in the Arab East means contamination of all kinds, made the young Arabs fuel for any flint. It so happened that when those youths reached early maturity they fell under the spell of Fascism and Nazism. The years between 1933-1936 were most decisive in moulding their political outlook. Mussolini was their idol; his marching black-shirts stirred their inflammable imagination. Hundreds of them streamed every year to Rome, securing free passage on Italian liners. Scores of those young Semites took part in the Nuremberg Congresses of race-hatred, and upon their return to the Holy Land injected that Fascist poison into the minds of

their friends. Ya'qub Ghussain, their Baldur von Schirach, was the actual leader of that Fascist youth-movement, while Haj-Amin al Hussaini looked to them as to his future Elite Guard.

Meantime the political atmosphere of Palestine was charged with dynamite, chiefly as a result of the Fascist march into Ethiopia. Never was British prestige so low in the Near East as it was in those fateful years. In 1935 the Egyptian political parties formed a "United Front," which demanded full independence. The serious riots of the Egyptian nationalists, as well as the pressure of Italian propaganda, made the British comply with their demands. Thereafter Italian and Nazi agents were busy arousing the Palestinian Arabs against the British and the Jews. The Arab press in Palestine turned into a boiling caldron of inflammatory propaganda. The *al-Liwa*, in particular, reprinted entire pages from Streicher's *Stuermer*. "Rise to rid yourselves from Jewish and British slavery" was a common slogan of all Arab dailies. The mushroom growth of those four-page tabloid newspapers in 1935, was made possible chiefly by funds from Italian and German sources. Their average circulation was no more than 2-3000.

Needless to say, Haj Amin al-Hussaini was the chief agitator who pulled the strings. The events in Ethiopia, Egypt and Syria played into his hands. Besides, Jewish immigration, which reached its peak of 65,000 in 1935, could be presented as an additional bogey to incite the Arabs. With Fascist-Nazi backing, the Grand-Mufti devised a plan of action. First, he would try to unite quarrelling leaders of the different parties. Secondly, he would proclaim a general strike to be followed by civil disobedience. Those two actions were meant to be bloodless, of course, but in order to make the British accept his political demands he would simultaneously have to apply a very strong dose of his blood-and-riot-formula. The prospects

of such application seemed very bright especially as financial and technical support from the Fascists and Nazis was at his disposal. Secretly, therefore, he organized guerrilla-bands who were to attack British and Jews.

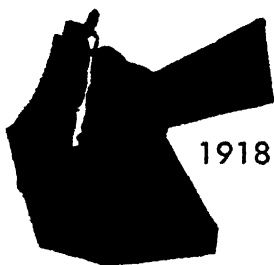
For several months prior to April 15, 1936, the day of the conflagration, the Hebrew press kept on warning the authorities of the danger lying ahead. In November 1935, the first terrorist-band came to grips with the police near Jenin, and as a result, four terrorists were killed, including their leader Sheikh Izz-ad-Din, a political refugee from Syria. The Arabs proclaimed him a martyr at a demonstrative funeral in Haifa. One of the newspapers, depicting how Izz-ad-Din preached in a *jihad* spirit, wrote: "Dear Friend and martyr, I have heard you preach from a platform resting on a sword." In the following months, the Mufti's emissaries stored dynamite and weapons all over the Arab villages, while he, the highest religious dignitary, made good use of his "platform resting on a sword."

In such an atmosphere the Jewish clandestine "self-defense" organization, Haganah, whose active membership then was estimated at 40,000, kept itself ready to meet the imminent threat. The subsequent events developed rapidly. On April 15, 1936, the first two Jews were killed on the Tul-Karm-Nablus highway. Ten days later the Arab parties met and formed a united front by establishing the "Arab Higher Committee" with Haj Amin as President. Ragheb Bey Nashashibi, Abdul-Latif as Salah, Dr. Hussain al-Khaldi, Ya'qub Ghussain, Alfred Rock, Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi and others who served on this Committee decided, as the Mufti had planned, to sink their differences in what Haj Amin called a common cause. They proclaimed a general strike until their demands for stoppage of Jewish immigration and for "the establishment of a National Government" were satisfactorily met. Shortly thereafter the guerrilla bands went into action. Haj Amin invited one Fawzi-ad-Din al

Kawkaji, an officer of the Iraqi Army, who appointed himself "leader of the rebel forces" and issued regular communiques on his engagements with the British and Jews. Because the Arabs of Palestine did not flock in great numbers to his "army," despite promises of good pay, he often resorted to terrorist methods in recruiting fighters, but when these did not bring the desired results either, he had to draw on manpower from Syria and Iraq. With the help of German and Italian instructors he trained his bands in trench-warfare, sniping and all types of sabotage. British and Jews were killed by scores, property was destroyed, roads were mined, the oil pipeline running to Haifa was punctured, and the railways were seriously damaged.

So serious did the situation become that the British had to call thousands of more troops to fight the gangs. But despite the presence of 20,000 British soldiers in Palestine, the terror went on, for the officers were instructed not to deal harshly with the rebels. This policy of the British was in line with the general appeasement principles of the Chamberlain cabinet. Who were those turbaned rebels in the hills of Judea, if not an early Fifth Column of the Axis? But since appeasement was then the fashion of the British rulers, it had to be observed in the Holy Land, too. Thus, after the rebels had sustained heavy losses, Gen. Dill, instead of beating them to the punch, made a deal with them by which they were given a chance to hide their weapons. The official report sounded very peculiar: "they (the bands) were permitted to disperse." Fauzi Kawkaji was likewise permitted to leave the country unpunished—the same al Kawkaji who so arrogantly had offered £25,000 for Gen. Dill's head to counterpart the British offer of £1,000 for his own head.

Just as in the past, the British dispatched a commission to investigate the "underlying causes" of this "rebellion." A Royal Commission under Lord Peel, arrived in Palestine



1918

PALESTINE OF BALFOUR DECLARATION



1922

PALESTINE OF THE MANDATE



1937

JEWISH STATE (PEEL)



1938

JEWISH STATE (WOODHEAD)

in November, 1936, and spent several months there. In July 1937 it issued a 404-page report which, among other conclusions stated: "The Arab community is predominantly Asiatic in character, the Jewish community predominantly European. They differ in religion and in language. Their cultural and social life, their ways of thought and conduct, are as incompatible as their national aspirations." (p. 370).

Since the members of the Royal Commission found Jewish and Arab national aspirations in Palestine irreconcilable, they suggested what they considered a radical solution, namely, the partition of Western Palestine into two separate and independent states. The Jewish State, according to this plan was to include a narrow strip along the coast, the valley of Jezreel and Galilee, an area of about

2,000 square miles. The rest of Palestine — except Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem and a corridor from Jerusalem to Jaffa which were to be placed under a permanent mandate — was to form an Arab State together with Transjordan. Thus of the original mandated territory of the Jewish National Home, an area of about 46,000 square miles, nearly 43,000 square miles was to be snatched away from the democratic Jewish community of Palestine, in response to Fascist threats. Such a cruel shrinkage of the Jewish National Home (see chart) brought about by the reactionary and muddling policies of the British Colonial Office, was another, though not the last, manifestation of appeasement. The partition plan, however, never saw realization, not only because both the Jews and the Arabs were split on that unfortunate proposal, but primarily because of its unworkability. For, after examining the technical possibilities of the partition-plan, the Woodhead Commission found it utterly impractical so that it had to be shelved altogether.

Meantime the Mufti rejoiced; one more round, and he would surely score a complete victory, for — as he probably reasoned — if by his methods he was able to carve out 43,000 square miles of the territory of the Jewish National Home, he was sure to get the negligible rest. And since gold flowed in abundance from Fascist sources, he called again upon his terrorist bands to resume the fight. This time the fight turned into a crimson wave of murder and assassination. British officials, the so-called “moderate” Arabs and “reluctant” fellaheen, were the chief victims.

The Defense Party of Ragheb Bey Nashashibi broke away from the Arab Higher Committee as a result of the Mufti's bloody purge of his opponents. The remaining members of this Committee were exiled by the British to the Seychells Islands, when in September 1937 L. Y. An-

drews, District Commissioner of Galilee, was treacherously assassinated in front of the church at Nazareth. But the Mufti, after hiding for some time at the Mosque al-Aqsa, managed to escape to Syria. With the arrival of Gen. Wavell in Palestine, the bands melted away while scores of the Nashashibis and their sympathizers were slaughtered by the Mufti's men.

Having thrown the Partition Plan overboard, the British sought some solution, a temporary one at least, of the Palestinian problem. As the shadow of Munich spread over Europe, and fear of new Nazi adventures grew, the timid rulers of the British Empire tried to preserve peace in the Mediterranean at all costs. Since Palestine was the trouble spot in this crucial period, the British called a round-table conference of Jews and Arabs to London with a view to bringing about some rapprochement. But it turned out to be far from a round-table conference, for the British allowed the emissaries of the Mufti to gain a majority over the "moderate" Arab delegates, and those leaders of the terrorist-gangs refused to sit with the Jews. The conference thus assumed the form of separate negotiations between both parties and the British Government.

The negotiations accomplished nothing, for the Mufti's spokesmen would agree to nothing less than the revocation of the Mandate. Such being the situation, the British on May 17, 1939 issued the MacDonald White Paper, which provided for complete stoppage of Jewish immigration in 1944, for prohibition of land sale to the Jews, and for the establishment of an independent government after a period of ten years. In other words, it foredoomed the Jews in Palestine to be frozen into a permanent and helpless minority subjected to intolerant Arab rule. Thus, by the issuance of the MacDonald White Paper, which the Jews branded as the "Black Paper," the Chamberlain cabinet

of appeasers not only repudiated an international treaty but also aimed at the virtual liquidation of the Jewish National Home.

When the House of Commons convened in May, 1939 to discuss the "White Paper," many of the most prominent leaders of Great Britain assailed that document as illegal, immoral and harmful to the imperial interest of Great Britain as well as to humanity. Winston Churchill, then in opposition, thundered defiantly: "I feel bound to vote against the proposals of His Majesty's Government. As one intimately and responsibly concerned in the earlier stages of our Palestine policy, I could not stand by and see solemn engagements into which Britain has entered before the World set aside for reasons of administrative convenience or — and it will be a vain hope — for the sake of a quiet life. I should feel personally embarrassed in the most acute manner if I lend myself by silence or inaction, to what I must regard as an act of repudiation.

"I regret very much that the pledge of the Balfour Declaration, endorsed as it has been by successive Governments, and the conditions under which we obtained the Mandate have both been violated by the Government's proposals. 'What is that but the destruction of the Balfour Declaration? What is that but a breach of faith?'"

In spite of powerful opposition, the House of Commons, acting under the pressure of the impending world explosion, accepted the new statement of policy of the Chamberlain cabinet by a slim margin. However, when the "White Paper" was presented to the Mandate Commission of the League of Nations, its members — including the British representative — stated that this new policy was "contrary both to the terms of the mandate and to the fundamental intentions of its authors."

Despite the fact that the "White Paper" remained an illegal document, for owing to the outbreak of World War

If the British failed to present it to the Council of the League, the Palestine Administration proceeded to carry out its provisions to the letter, even in the darkest hour of Jewry when millions of uprooted Jews vainly sought refuge in Palestine, in frantic attempts to escape the Nazi hell.

The final upshot of the "White Paper" policy has been just that of all previous papers, namely, that it has failed utterly to untangle the Palestinian knot. Of course, it achieved what Prof. Rappard, member of the Mandates Commission, called "turning the mandate upside down," but even so it only acerbated the vexed problem of Palestine. It proved highly detrimental to all parties concerned. The Jews were sold out to the Fascist Arabs; the Arabs at large were set in a state of constant turmoil, and the British were soon to find out that their policy in Palestine was almost suicidal not only for them but also for the whole Democratic World.

10

Along the Nile

Ever since modern Egypt came into being, it had regarded itself outside the borders of Pan-Arabia. The Egyptians, although Arab speaking, have actually nothing in common with the Arabs. Except for the small upper class consisting of Albanians, Arabs, Circassians, and Turks, the people of Egypt are of the "Nilotic stock," whose origins may be traced to the days of the ancient Pharaohs. However, Arabicized linguistically, the Egyptians have played a prominent role in Arab history, creating political and cultural centres along the Nile.

As in the past, they have also in recent years carried the torch of progress in this vital area which links the East with the West.

Modern Egypt owes its origin to Mehemed Ali, who began the real struggle of Egypt's independence on the very day the British defeated the French at Abukir on July 14, 1799. This ambitious officer of Albanian descent fought the French, British and his own sovereign, the Sultan of Turkey. The tower of skulls erected by him at the citadel of Cairo, following the horrid massacres of the British in 1807, had long served a memento to foreign intruders. Mehemed Ali was not pleased by the honor of Pasha conferred on him by the Sultan. He strove for real power which he acquired in the most cruel manner by slaughtering the Mamluk Beys who were lured by the Pasha to take part in a feast at the citadel of Cairo. But his importance

for modern Egypt does not lie merely in the battles he fought, or in the massacres he perpetrated. Of course, by coloring the Egyptians' sword with blood and glory, he struck the note of national awakening on the banks of the Nile; but of more greater importance was his administrative genius which laid the groundwork for a modernized country.

By initiating the great irrigation works on the Nile, Mehemed Ali laid the economic foundation of a new Egypt, making possible the vast cotton plantations, the main resources of Egyptian wealth. As did the ancient Pharaohs, in building the Pyramids, he likewise employed slave labor of the fellaheen to build dams and reconstruct the harbor of Alexandria. Like Pharaoh of the Joseph-era, he personally swallowed the bulk of the cultivated land in Egypt, "buying" vast estates at prices fixed by the Pasha himself. The ruling class, especially the Turks and Circasians, helped Mehemed Ali to execute his land policy, while the fellaheen were starving. And since then the dynasty has been working hand in hand with the upper class who succeeded in wielding unlimited economic power in Egypt until this very day. As much as Mehemed Ali hated the foreigners, his monopolizing of trade forced him to open the doors of Egypt to the same French and British whose military penetration he had fought so valiantly. During his long rule (1804-1849), Mehemed Ali firmly established a powerful dynasty that was destined to play a foremost role in shaping the destiny of modern Egypt.

His successor, Abbas, hated foreigners more than his great predecessor, but failed to check the ever growing might of the European colony along the Nile. It was Sa'id who made great strides in extending and buttressing the economic structure of Egypt. The first railway, linking Cairo with Alexandria, was built by British capital. The first concessions to set up telegraphs and to open banks were

obtained by the British. But the concession to build the Suez Canal fell to the French Lesseps, a personal friend of Sa'id. When Isma' Pasha became ruler in 1863, there began the most eventful period in Egyptian history. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 made Egypt the foremost target of European imperialism. Isma'il's misrule made this target highly vulnerable. By building lucrative palaces and spending fortunes on turgid exhibitions and feasts, Isma'il undermined the finances of his country, and thereby invited foreign intrusion. For the title "Khedive" conferred upon him by the Sultan, he agreed to pay an annual tribute of £720,000. His luxurious Court squandered £12,000,000 within a period of two years. The sum of £4,000,000 which he received from the British Government for his shares in the Suez Canal, did not save Egyptian finances from bankruptcy, but only represented the mess of pottage for which the British acquired a firm foothold on Egyptian soil. Faced with a stupendous deficit of £94,000,000, Isma'il had to place his country under the receivership of the "Caisse de la dette publique." True, this permanent commission controlled by the British and French, put the Egyptian finances in order in the course of time, but for that service Egypt had to pay with gradual loss of its political independence. In forming the new Egyptian cabinet, Isma'il was compelled to include two foreigners, Sir River Wilson, Minister of Finance, and Monsieur de Blignières, Minister for Public Works. This encroachment upon the inner affairs of Egypt was only the beginning of a process which ultimately led to military intervention by the British.

When, upon the deposal of Isma'il by the Sultan, Tewfiq became Khedive, Egypt was heading for an extremely troublesome period. A new force came into being, a force which sprang from within the people as a protest against the dynasty, the ruling class and foreign control. This force which manifested itself in the revolt of Ahmed Arabi Pasha,

is undoubtedly the first sign of the national awakening in Egypt. Arabi, the father of Egyptian nationalism, was a son of a fellah. As an officer in the Egyptian army, he painfully felt the inferior status in which the soldiers and officers of the fellaheen class were kept by the Turkish and Circassian masters. These officers of the "Nilotic" stock not only were regarded by their masters as inferior natives, but also received smaller pay than their upper-class comrades. Besides, the ever aggravating situation of their fathers-fellaheen as a result of mismanagement on the part of the Khedive and his associates, added fuel to their wrath. A secret organization of officers was founded with the aim of deposing the Khedive and ousting the Turks from high positions. Of course, this movement was anti-foreign, for it considered the ruling class, rightly or wrongly, as puppets of the British. "Egypt for the Egyptians" was Arabi's slogan. Such national sentiment evoked favorable echoes among the sheikhs and students of *al-Azhar*, the Moslem Theological College at Cairo. Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, who taught there eight years (1872-1879) was the prime mover of the anti-foreign stir. Another eminent scholar, Muhammad Abdou, seeking to stem the onrush of Western ideas by "reforming" Islam, stressed the moral aspect of Islam as against the immorality of the West and interpreted the Koran in conformity with the law of change. This religious-cultural current of the al-Azhar was another lasting contribution to the Egyptian national movement.

The revolt began in 1879 as Arabi, then a colonel, aided by a group of officers demanded the dismissal of the Minister of War, Othman Pasha Rifki. The rebelling group was outright detained. When the news reached Arabi's followers, his loyal battalions came to the Minister of War's rescue, and so the first round was won. In 1851 Arabi reached for what has been called the "Magna Charta of Egypt." Surrounding the palace of the Khedive with troops, he pre-

sented to him the "demands of the people," which called for dismissing the Cabinet, electing a Legislative Assembly, and strengthening the army.

The Khedive yielded. A new cabinet, the first nationalist cabinet of Egypt, was formed with Mahmud Pasha as Prime Minister and Arabi as Minister of War. The British and the French saw in this move a direct challenge to their interests. To forestall more serious events, the British and French fleets appeared in Alexandria on May 24, 1882, with the aim of backing up the ultimatum presented to the Khedive, in which the two European Powers demanded the removal of the new cabinet. The Khedive yielded, but did not dare oust Arabi from his post. Tension increased, and on June 11, 1882 riots broke out in Alexandria. Scores of Europeans were slaughtered by the mob, and had it not been for the intervention of Arabi, the massacres would have taken a heavy toll.

A more serious clash with the British seemed imminent. Arabi prepared his troops and began strengthening the defenses of Alexandria. Several ultimata of the British demanding immediate cessation of the defense works in Alexandria went unheeded by Arabi, who believed that only the sword could settle the dispute with the British. The occasion for such a settlement came very shortly, for on July 11, 1882 the British fleet shelled Alexandria and set the city on fire. The decisive battle between Arabi's troops and the British was fought at Tel-el-Kabir on September 13. Arabi was defeated and surrendered. He was tried by the British as a rebel and sentenced to death. But the British did not carry out the sentence; instead, he was exiled to Ceylon where he spent 19 years. He died at Cairo in 1911, brokenhearted, poor and almost forgotten by his people.

The failure of Arabi's revolt caused a sharp drop in Egypt's nationalist temperature. British occupation of

the country did not evoke any revolutions for some time, at least. Arabi's upheaval in no way lessened the predicament of the fellaheen, who found themselves on the very brink of starvation. Small wonder that Lord Cromer (Sir Evelyn Baring), who came to rule Egypt in 1883, found it not difficult to carry out his plans. Since he was primarily concerned with economic rehabilitation, the Egyptians cooperated willingly. A period of stability and prosperity followed. Lord Cromer set up an excellent administration to put the Egyptian house in order. Owing to his ingenuity, the bankrupt legacy of Isma'il was no longer to hang over Egypt like the sword of Damocles. Irrigation works extended immensely, improving the situation of the fellaheen who now saw their fields yielding threefold crops. By employing machines to carry out the great irrigation schemes, Lord Cromer abolished slave labor (*corvée*) introduced by Mehemed Ali. The judicial system was greatly improved, and so were sanitary conditions because of fine hospitals built in the Cromer era. The Egyptian cabinets worked relatively smoothly under the control of British "advisers."

British imperialism of the Salisbury brand served quite well the economic and cultural development of Egypt. But all those blessings failed to make the Egyptians relinquish their desire for political freedom. Abbas II (Abbas Hilmi), who in 1892 succeeded Tewfiq as Khedive, was ostensibly anti-British. During his reign a new nationalist force came to the fore. Urban intelligentsia were destined to play the most decisive part in this fight for the freedom of Egypt. The spokesman for these Westernized intellectuals was Mustapha Kamel, the ideologist of Egyptian nationalism. In his pamphlet "*LaPéril Egyptien*," he attacked the British imperial policy and demanded freedom for his country. Educated in France, Mustapha Kamel acquired a pro-French orientation. Counting on British-

French rivalry in their colonial policy and bearing in mind the fact that the French fleet did not join the British in their attack on Alexandria, he hoped that French intervention would eventually bring about the liberation of Egypt from the British yoke. In this hope, however, he was greatly disillusioned after the "Entente Cordiale" had settled the British-French rivalry, and thus eliminated France as a political factor in Egypt.

Notwithstanding this disillusionment, Mustapha Kamel tried to cause some political stir in Egypt, and although Muhammad Abdou, who became meanwhile Grand Mufti of Egypt, to some degree supported Kamel's ideas, the movement failed to evoke widespread repercussions, having been confined to a small handful of intellectuals. But this handful succeeded in getting a hold on the students of Al-Azhar, and thus created a restless intelligentsia who henceforth were to constitute the vanguard of Egyptian nationalism.

When Kamel died in 1908, the seeds of revolt had been well planted on the banks of the Nile, though many years were to elapse before the real struggle for freedom made itself felt. The year 1910 marked a tension occasioned by the assassination of the pro-British Prime Minister, Butrus Pasha, a Christian Copt, who had presided over the famous trial at Denshawi in 1906, at which four Egyptian fellaheen were sentenced to death for an attack on British officers. The assassin was Ibrahim Wardani, one of the nationalist students, who by this act purported to set off a general explosion. However, he failed to arouse the Egyptians to a revolt against the British, for the fellaheen were indifferent, and the Westernized elements in the cities were too weak to start a successful campaign against the occupants. No doubt, any uprising would have been nipped in the bud by the strong hand of Lord Kitchener, who served as High Commissioner of Egypt in 1911-1914.

When World War I broke out, both Kitchener and Abbas Hilmi were out of Egypt. Kitchener was in London, and the Khedive sojourned in Constantinople plotting with the Sultan against the British. Rushdi Pasha, then Egyptian Prime Minister, declared himself for Britain. Since the Suez Canal was in immediate danger of being attacked by the Turks, the British acted quickly and resolutely. On December 18, 1914, they declared Egypt a protectorate, having deposed Hilmi and abolished the sovereignty of the Turkish Sultan. To make the severance of Egypt's allegiance to Turkey all the more complete, they elevated the new Khedive, Hussain Kamel, to the dignity of Sultan of Egypt. During the war the nationalist sentiments of the Egyptians could not manifest themselves in the face of strong contingents of British troops stationed there. And although the recruitment by the British of the Egyptian Labor Corps that served behind the Allied battlefronts, caused a considerable deal of grumbling among the Egyptians, the British did not encounter any open hostility in Egypt as long as the war lasted. The new Sultan, Ahmed Fuad, who succeeded his brother Hussain in 1917, was highly cooperative.

But as soon as the war was over, Egyptian nationalism assumed new dynamic power. This rise of Egypt's dynamism was primarily due to the efforts of one man whose very name is tantamount to Egyptian independence. He was Sa'ad Zaghlul Pasha, "a fellah of fellaheen," whose abilities and ambitions not only brought him into the high society of the upper class but also made him the foremost figure in the political life of his country. Already, in the Cromer era, he had served as Minister of Education; but in 1914 he revealed himself as an uncompromising champion for Egypt's freedom, by heading the opposition in Muhammad Sa'id's cabinet. For the duration of the war he had been reticent, watching the fateful events. But with the cessa-

tion of hostilities, he began organizing his followers into a force which in a short time became the most powerful political party on the Nile. This party of independence, known as *Wafd* (Delegation) was born on November 18, 1918, when a delegation consisting of Zaghlul and his two associates, Ali Shaarawi Pasha and Abdul Aziz Fahmi Bey, presented themselves to Sir Reginald Wingate, British High Commissioner to Egypt, demanding full independence on the ground of Wilson's Declaration.

While presenting this demand, Zaghlul advised the High Commissioner of his party's decision to dispatch a delegation to the Peace Conference. In transmitting Zaghlul's request to London, Wingate proposed to the British Cabinet to invite representatives of the *Wafd* in order to open negotiations. As London coldshouldered this proposal, Wingate went to England in 1919 to advise his masters of the ever worsening situation in Egypt, where Rushdi, the Prime Minister, threatened to resign under the strong pressure of the *Wafdists*. Sir Cheetham, who took over as acting High Commissioner in the absence of Wingate, warned Zaghlul not to undertake any political actions which might jeopardize public security. Zaghlul did not heed his warning. He agitated violently, calling the Egyptians to press their demands for freedom. Cheetham counteracted swiftly by deporting Zaghlul and his three close associates to Malta.

This resolute step of Cheetham only accelerated the outbreak of the very thing Wingate had tried to forestall so desperately. The Sheikhs and students of al-Azhar gave the signal, and violent riots broke out in the streets of Cairo and Alexandria. Telegraph posts were pulled out, railroads damaged and British attacked. Throughout March 1919, those rebellious acts kept on stirring the country to such a degree that the British called upon Gen. Allenby to pacify the revolting Egyptians. Allenby found it difficult to

grapple with the situation, for he soon realized that the Egyptian problem could not be solved by military means alone.

It was not only a question of riots. The general strike, which broke out upon Allenby's arrival, represented a more serious problem. All the government officials, including the judges walked out, and the railroads were at a standstill. Allenby tried diplomacy. He began conferring with the Sheikh of al-Azhar and the Copt Patriarch. They agreed to issue an appeal to the populace to stop the riots, but made it conditional upon the release of Zaghlul. With London's approval, Zaghlul returned from his exile, but the passive resistance was still in force. Rushdi was no longer master of the situation, although he had tried his utmost to exhort the Wafd to terminate the strike. And when Rushdi was compelled to resign his office as Prime Minister, owing to the calumnies and threats of the Nationalists, Allenby cast off his diplomatic gloves and acted forcefully with military rigor. To the striking officials he served an ultimatum to return to work immediately. To safeguard security and prevent further outbreaks, he set up military courts. Then the Milner Mission, a commission under Lord Milner, was dispatched to Egypt with a view of investigating the causes of the troubles. The Nationalists boycotted this mission, and the Egyptian General Assembly promptly convened, declaring the British protectorate illegal.

The man behind those moves was Zaghlul, of course. The British finally recognized Zaghlul's tremendous popularity, as they invited the Maltese exile to London in 1920. After long negotiations an understanding was reached. Britain was to recognize Egypt as an independent and constitutional monarchy, but, in turn, was to be given the right of protecting foreign interests (Capitulations), of maintaining garrisons on the Suez Canal as well as some share of controlling Egyptian foreign policy. While these negotiations were

going on in London, Adli Pasha of Macedonian descent, formed a new cabinet and summoned Zaghlul to Cairo in order to appoint a delegation whose task would be to bring the proposed treaty to a successful conclusion. Zaghlul refused to leave London, demanding for the Wafdists a majority in the delegation. Adli, who represented the upper class, would not see Zaghlul the sole master of Egyptian affairs; therefore he went himself to London. Soon Zaghlul returned to Cairo and began such a violent agitation against the "treacherous" Prime Minister that the latter was forced to resign. To bring matters to a final showdown, Zaghlul called a congress of the Wafd for December 23, but this congress was forbidden by Allenby, and in addition, Zaghlul was again interned and exiled to the Seychelles. Then Allenby went to London to speed up the negotiations.

On February 26, 1922, Allenby presented to the Egyptian Sultan the Declaration of Independence on behalf of His Majesty's Government. True, it was a limited independence, for the British reserved for themselves certain rights as securing the 'imperial communications' in Egypt, the defense of the country, protection of foreigners and their domination over Sudan. But limited as this declaration was, it established a Kingdom along the Nile and paved the way for complete freedom to come.

In 1923 Zaghlul was released from his banishment, and upon his return to Cairo he launched a vigorous campaign for the elections to the newly constituted Parliament. In those elections the Wafd won an overwhelming majority, having secured 190 seats out of 214. Following this victory, Zaghlul became Prime Minister, and as such again went to London to negotiate with Ramsay MacDonald in order to achieve full independence. Zaghlul failed in his second mission, too, for he demanded the replacement of the High Commissionership by an Embassy, a free Sudan, as well as the upkeep of the British garrison by the British

taxpayer. Upon Zaghlul's return to Egypt, the situation became tense.

Soon the Egyptian caldron exploded as the Governor of Sudan, Sir Lee Stack, was assassinated by an Egyptian student on November 19, 1924. Confronted with an extremely harsh ultimatum by Allenby, Zaghlul resigned, and a new cabinet, controlled by the King and the upper class, was formed under Ziwari Pasha. The Egyptian troops in Sudan were disarmed by the British, and not until 1926 did the Wafd again come to the foreground in the new elections which were made possible by the new High Commissioner, Lord Lloyd. This time, however, a coalition cabinet came into being, a cabinet comprised of Wafdists, Liberals, and Ittehedists (The King's Party of Union). Zaghlul preferred to remain in shade so as to take off the stigma from the Wafdists who were blamed for the assassination of Sir Lee Stack. During that period of calm Zaghlul died on August 23, 1927. His funeral turned into a mighty and impressive demonstration of the Egyptian people, who honored Egypt's greatest son, the foremost champion of Egyptian liberty, a decent and straightforward man with stamina of a genuine leader. In the forthcoming years the Egyptian people built a memorial for their leader near the "House of the Nation" and erected two statues in Alexandria and Cairo.

Zaghlul's death was a severe blow to the Wafd. Mustapha Nahas Pasha, who succeeded Zaghlul as the head of the Wafd, was not of his predecessor's stature, but he tried to follow his master's extreme policy in dealing with the British. His uncompromising attitude prompted King Fuad in 1928 to dissolve the Wafd controlled Parliament as well as to suspend the Constitution. Mehemed Pasha Mahmud, leader of the Liberals and one of Zaghlul's earliest associates, became Prime Minister. He was a middle-of-the-roader. For one thing, he succeeded in lowering the prestige of the

Wafd party by exposing the corruption of some of its leaders. On the other hand, he also managed to withstand the pressure of the Egyptian aristocracy. Owing to him, the British were willing to make further concessions, in that they acquiesced to withdraw their garrisons from Alexandria and Cairo as well as to forego the Capitulations. He played extremely fair with the Wafd as in 1929 he influenced the King to decree new elections and re-enact the Constitution. Again the Wafd came to power with Nahas Pasha as head of a coalition cabinet. In 1930 he went to London to negotiate a new treaty, but, like Zaghlul, would not compromise on the Sudan question. Moreover, he defied the King's instructions to conclude the treaty without a final settlement of the Sudan question, a step which caused his downfall. Again the King dissolved the Parliament and suspended the Constitution. Sidqi Pasha, the new Prime Minister, ruled autocratically until 1934, when Tewfiq Nessim Pasha replaced the sick Prime Minister after two interim-Premiers had been dismissed.

The hour of Egypt's liberation struck in 1935 as Mussolini's troops marched into Ethiopia. Fascist propaganda in Egypt soared to new heights. The students of al-Azhar took the lead in inciting the mob to riots. Telegraph poles, street cars, railroads were the first objects of the saboteurs. Attacks on British followed. To quiet down the ever growing unrest, the King re-enacted the Constitution and decreed new elections. In the meantime Ali Maher, an anti-British aristocrat, formed a transitional cabinet. But as the British seemed unwilling to relax their grip on Egypt, new riots broke out in the streets of Cairo and Alexandria. Sir Miles Lampson, High Commissioner for Egypt, urged immediate settlement. As a result of his endeavor, a delegation composed of all Egyptian parties and headed by Nahas Pasha began negotiations in Cairo. These negotiations were continued in London and finally concluded on August 26,

1936, with a treaty of alliance, ratified by the British Parliament on December 22, 1936.

According to the treaty, Great Britain was given the right to maintain troops and airdromes for the defense of the Suez Canal until such time as Egypt would be militarily able to safeguard this vital artery of world navigation. Britain was also given the right of using the naval bases of Alexandria and Port Sa'id as well as of moving troops across the country for the defense of Egypt. On the other hand, Britain relinquished its right to the Capitulations which were to be abolished under a twelve year scheme adopted at the Montreux conference in 1937. The Sudan was to become a condominium under British-Egyptian rule.

Thus British occupation of Egypt, which lasted 54 years, came to an end. The Cairo-citadel, which has been the symbol of Egypt's liberation since the days of Mehemed Ali, again assumed its fullest significance as the Egyptian flag fluttered from its top. However, King Fuad was not to witness that shiny moment in Egypt's history, for he died on April 28, 1936 in the thick of the decisive negotiations. His seventeen year old son Farouk, who was enthroned a year later, turned out to be an autocratic monarch who firmly took the reins of Egyptian affairs into his hands despite his young age. Surrounded by the aristocracy, he despised the Wafd, as his father had, for its popularity among the millions of the common people. As his first public act of opposition, on December 30, 1937, he dismissed Nahas Pasha and appointed Muhammad Mehmud of the "Constitutional Liberals" as the new Prime Minister. When new elections were held in April 1938, the Wafdists suffered a dismal defeat. The glory of the mightiest political party seemed to be ebbing.

This situation was not occasioned solely by the King's reactionary clique who in every possible way employed its

power to curb the influence of the Wafdists; it had much deeper roots. For, complete independence having been achieved, the Wafd found itself ideologically aimless. It should be borne in mind that the political program of the Wafd since its birth, had ever been focused around one objective: full independence for Egypt. However, insofar as an economic or social program is concerned, it resembled all other political parties of the Arab speaking countries in that it lacked a constructive plan for building up a freed society. As long as fighting a "foreign yoke" was the paramount issue of Egyptian politics, the Wafd always played first fiddle, being a resolute champion for this very cause. However, with the foreign yoke removed, the common people were looking for some tangible fruits of that freedom to the achievement of which they, too, had contributed a great deal. But the leaders of the Wafd had to offer nothing, or very little. They were chiefly interested in securing government jobs for their next of kin, or in fomenting political quarrels among themselves. Those unhealthy conditions brought about a serious crack within the Wafd, as one its top-notch leaders, Nekrashi Pasha, broke away from Mustapha Nahas and formed a new party to which flocked malcontents of every design, including a considerable number of youths. Besides, Fascist trends, too, began undermining the integrity of the Wafd. Small wonder that, owing to all those factors, the Wafd experienced a serious crisis which seemed all the more serious in view of the increasingly critical political situation in the Mediterranean.

King Farouk and his obedient aristocracy were not at all displeased at the inner discord among the Wafd leaders, their main objective being to wield unlimited power so as to safeguard their own interests. And their interests mean ownership of Egypt in the real sense of that word, for the King and the feudal lords own the greatest part of

the cultivated land in Egypt. Nowhere in the Near East are there such immense *latifundia* as those of the Egyptian effendis. This plutocratic class would, of course, do nothing to better the lot of the fellaheen or the laborers. On the other hand, the intelligentsia being primarily politically minded have not as yet employed their energies to solve the social and economic problems of Egypt. There had been only sporadic attempts of certain individuals to formulate a socio-economic program for the common people. One of those is Emin Effendi Youssef, father of the co-operative movement in Egypt, whose primary aim is to eliminate the foreign middleman of Egypt, namely the Greeks and Italians. Labor in Egypt is poorly organized. The socio-economic lethargy of the Egyptian people is due to the fact that political parties in a country, where 90% of the population is illiterate, are merely cliques organized and led by strong personalities who are as a rule rugged individualists. Therefore, such names as those of "Liberals," "Constitutional Liberals," "Independents," or "Ittihadists," ought not to mislead us, for they connote small pressure groups rather than movements based on programs or constituencies.

In spite of all this, Egypt is regarded as the Westernized apex of the Arab speaking countries. Dr. Taha Hussain, one of the most brilliant minds of modern Egypt, contends that his country is essentially occidental. True, it possesses the most developed press in the Arab world. Cairo is the abode of the greatest Moslem Theological College, al-Azhar; Egypt has a network of modern schools, as well as a secular "Alma Mater," the Fuad-University, or the Egyptian National University. Egypt prides itself on possessing the magnificent and longest dam in the world, the Gabel Awlia. The Bank Misr, the Misr-airwork, radio stations and cinemas are additional features of modernized Egypt. Modern hospitals are being built, and sanitary conditions are

being improved. However, bearing in mind that only 10% of the population has reaped the fruits of Westernization and nationalism, for only the upper class and the urban intelligentsia are educated and enjoy a relatively high standard of living — one must arrive at the conclusion that the process of Westernization which began over a century and a half ago with the advent of Mehemed Ali, has progressed at a snail's pace.

This conclusion is all the more amazing as Egypt is one of the most vital crossroads in the world. It is a land of plenty, where on the vital Suez Canal there rests a cotton-oil-sugar pyramid. But the richness of this pyramid has so far benefited the modern Pharaoh, his taskmakers, and foreign companies. This highly unequal distribution of wealth along the Nile has been made possible by keeping the bulk of the population outside schools and outside government representation. The political leaders of Egypt, including those of the Wafd, seem not to be perturbed over this state of affairs, for, instead of concentrating on solving their domestic problems, they to, look across their borders to take the lead in a Federation of Arab countries, and bolster their position in the international arena. And although by emphasizing their Egyptianism they draw a distinct line between themselves and the rest of the Arab world, they nonetheless cherish the prospect of assuming political leadership of those "inferior" Arabs.

And there is a vast area where such Arabs live, particularly in backward North Africa.

The Slumbering Maghreb

The stretch of North Africa known as the Maghreb, and comprising Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, represents a unique zone in the Moslem world. Racially, linguistically and even religiously, it sharply differs from the rest of the Arab-speaking countries. Berbers, Arabs, Jews, Spaniards and others have produced the motley population of the Maghreb. Racially the most pristine element are the Berbers, who constitute a majority in Morocco and a considerable minority in Algeria. As a branch of the white race, they take great pride in their non-Arab origin, exalting their gallant ancestors who defended North Africa against the Phoenicians, Romans and other invaders. When the Arabs conquered the coastal regions of North Africa, some of those Berbers professed Christianity. However, Islam appealed to them more strongly than the faith of the meek, because it provided them with an opportunity amply to display their proverbial bellicosity. By the criterion of jihad, those Berberic tribes generated the most fanatic Moslems who, known as Almohades and Almoravides, played a foremost part in the turbulent history of Arab Spain.

The Islamization of the Berbers took several centuries as the militant brotherhoods (marabout) were performing missionary work at the point of the sword. Despite that, many of their pagan practices, as tomb and saint-worship, remained unaffected, and their local shrines take precedence over the other Moslem shrines, not excluding the Holy

Cities of Mecca and Medina. They have most successfully resisted Arabization, and already in the Twelfth Century, the Moroccan revolutionary, Ibn Tumart, translated the Koran into Berberic. To this very day they adhere to their original tribal organization, speak Berberic idioms, are mostly monogamists, their women wearing no veils. They are hostile to the Arab speaking population, concentrated largely in the towns.

The non-Berberic elements speak Arabic dialects which greatly differ from the Arabic spoken elsewhere. Even their script, known as Maghrebi, is different from the regular script employed in the other Arab speaking countries. The Maghreb possesses its own Holy Cities, as Kairowan in Tunisia, Fez in Morocco with its Karouin mosque and higher institution of learning, and others. A great number of mystical orders are spread over the Maghreb, such as the Alawiya, Tiyaniya, Rahmaniya, Ammariya and others. The oldest sect in Islam, the Khawarij, has its strongholds at Mzab and Jebel Nefusa. The Maghreb has its own Caliph, whose ancestors established the Sherifian dynasty in the Ninth Century. The sultan-caliph, who resides at Fez, and who nominates the *Khalifa* of Spanish Morocco, would by no means recognize the authority of another caliph.

Under the firm grip of the French Colonial regime, the Maghreb's nationalist feelings have been doomed to remain lethargic. Occasional outbreaks of local nationalist movements have occurred during the last two decades; there were some attempts to further the idea of a United Maghreb conceived by Shakib Arslan, head of the Arab Bureau in Geneva; but on the whole, none of the nationalists movements in the Maghreb succeeded in breaking the Colonial grip. Negligible in numerical strength and lacking the driving power of genuine revolutions, those movements foundered on the granite-rock of the French Colonial regime.

Algeria is the most civilized province of the Maghreb. Administratively, it is a part of France, being divided into departments, arrondissements and communes. The European settlers, numbering nearly 1,000,000 out of a population of 7,500,000 are, of course, the most influential stratum of the population not only by virtue of their cultural superiority but also because of their political privilege of electing and representing Algeria, as Deputies and Senators to the French Parliament in Paris. They wield the real power in Algeria, being a permanent majority in the Counsel Superiour, while the natives have to content themselves with the right to run the Municipal Councils of their communities. The Moslems, as French subjects, may become naturalized citizens by renouncing their personal status, which is tantamount to renouncing their Moslem loyalty, for the personal status enables them to avoid "infidel" courts in such vital matters as marriage, divorce, paternal authority and succession. There is a small number of such citizens in Algeria who are known there as "assimilationists." Their aim is to become French nationals rather than Algerian Arabs. They find, however, little favor with the natives, who have contempt for these *meturni* (renegades). This trend of assimilationism is being bitterly combated by the *Ulema* of Algeria as well as by the Nationalists.

Nor has the reformist movement (Islahi) taken any deep roots in Algeria. These reformists, whose aim is to secularize Islam and build a new society on the Turkish pattern, are just a handful of intellectuals. Their French periodicals as *La Voix Indigène* and *La Voix des Humbles* preach assimilationism in a milder form.

Echoes of Arab struggle for independence evoked some repercussions in Algeria. The turn of events in Egypt, Syria and Iraq as well as Shakib Arslan's propaganda brought about the first sprouts of nationalism in Algeria. It was not, however, until 1929, when the first nationalist organiza-

tion was founded under the name of "The North African Star." The leader of this movement, Messali Haj, was an ardent disciple of Shakib Arslan, and as such agitated for nothing less than an independent Algeria. Such agitation under a French Colonial regime could be regarded only as subversiveness bordering on treason. No wonder that the French authorities took the most severe measures to suppress "The North African Star," whose activities had to be carried on underground. When Leon Blum became Premier of France, Messali Haj went to Paris, hoping that with the support of the Popular Front he would be able to act more freely in his homeland. Encouraged by the liberal winds blowing in France, he came to Algeria and began launching a vigorous campaign for his revolutionary ideas. Nazi propaganda, too, took a hand in fomenting trouble, and thus in November, 1937 disorders broke out in Algiers, but the French Governor acted firmly, nipping the riots in the bud and imprisoning its instigator, Messali Haj.

French policy regarding this part of North Africa could hardly call for a substantial change, no matter what political party was at the helm in Paris. For independence or semi-independence of a province that is regarded as an *integral* part of the French motherland, seems to be entirely out of the question. The solution of the Algerian problem, insofar as the French are concerned, revolves rather about the type of naturalization to be granted to the natives. Out of the numerous bills introduced in the French Parliament, the most liberal was the so-called Violette-Blum Bill, which proposed naturalization of the Algerians with the retention of their personal status. However, though the Blum cabinet favored such a solution, the bill was killed by the French representatives of Algeria.

Nor have the natives of Tunisia been more successful in their nationalist aspirations than their Algerian neighbors

have been, despite the fact that Tunisia is not a part of France, but merely a "protectorate." Nominally the Bey is the ruler of Tunisia, but the factual power is wielded by the French Resident-General, who is responsible to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris. The local government has but a small minority of natives. Just as in Algeria, the French possess in Tunisia a European colony numbering about 204,000 of whom 94,000 are of Italian descent.

The nationalist movement in Tunisia may be traced back to 1919, when a group of Tunisians sent a petition to President Wilson, demanding a constitution for their country. This movement known as the "Destour Party" was actually striving for the abolition of the protectorate. Under the leadership of Sheikh Thaalbi, demonstrations were organized in Tunisia with a view to pressing the demand for a constitution. The French authorities responded, as they did in Algeria, by suppressing all attempts to foment disorders. Their leader was exiled, his aides imprisoned, and the population somewhat placated by forming "Representative assemblies" where the natives were promised a larger share in local government.

However, the Destourists fought on. In 1930, this organization split in two on the issue of the protectorate. "The Old Destours," fanatical and religious, would acquiesce to no compromise, absolutely refuting the legality of the protectorate, while "The New Destours" was willing to reach an understanding with the French protectors. Out of the struggle among the Destourists evolved a most radical party, known as the "National Reform Party," whose leader, Habib Bourghiba, looked toward Fascism for inspiration. Encouraged by the tension in the Mediterranean, Habib Bourghiba organized his followers for a revolt. Riots broke out in 1937, which reoccurred with more vigor in April 1938.

But the showdown lasted a very short time. French troops quelled the disorders in no time, imprisoning Habib Bourghiba and all his active associates. Henceforth peace prevailed in the protectorate, for the Tunisians, intimidated by Mussolini's cry for Tunisia and threatened by a strong Italian Fifth Column within their borders, lost heart in fomenting further troubles for the French.

It is rather characteristic that from amidst the Arab-speaking population of Morocco, who are but a minority in this Berberic country, there sprung a movement aiming not only to dominate Morocco proper, but also to unite the whole Maghreb under Arab domination.

It was Muhammad Abdul Krim, chief of the Beni Uriaghel, the most warlike of the Riffi tribes, who raised the banner of Moroccan nationalism. His forceful rebellion, which lasted nearly three years (1924-27), indirectly influenced the Arab-speaking elements of Fez, Marrakesh, Rabat and Tetuan to lift their national spirits. For Abdul Krim, being a pure-blooded Berber, fought but for a Riffi Sultanate in Spanish Morocco. As a proud mountaineer, he despised — as all Berbers do — the Arab city-dwellers. But his heroic feats provided a stimulus for the Arab Moroccans. Shakib Arslan and a group of educated Fezians who studied in Paris are responsible for the formation of the nationalist "Moroccan Action" (Comité d' Action Marecaine) founded in 1934. This organization, headed by Muhammad Allal el Fassi, aimed at the emancipation of Morocco by legal methods. The members of this Committee drafted a plan of reforms which, if accepted by the French would mean, in the final analysis, abrogation of the protectorate. They entertained some hope for realizing their aims as the Popular Front came to power in Paris. But soon they were to be disillusioned inasmuch as the Blum Government cold-shouldered the demands of the "Moroccan

Action." Thereupon the Moroccan nationalists resorted to riots which broke out in August 1937. Allal el Fassi took the lead in stirring up those riots which threatened to assume a very serious character. Nazi propaganda was not lacking in Fez and in Rabat. General Nogues, who came in 1936 as Resident General to Morocco, displayed an iron hand in dealing with the rebels. The Berber *goums* played a vital part in restoring order in Morocco. Allal el Fassi and his aide Abdel Jalil were arrested at Fez, and so was Muhammad Lyazid, who organized the disorders at Rabat. Morocco, too, seemed to have been pacified.

Also in Spanish Morocco the Arab-speaking element inaugurated a nationalist movement on the eve of World War II. The most important organization was the "Morocco Unity," under the leadership of Mekkiel Nasiri. Its program is based on Islam and Arab chauvinism, with strongly anti-Berber tendencies. These fanatics of Tetuan pledge themselves to make Morocco a purely Moslem state where all other creeds must be extirpated. In addition to that, they want to see Arabic as the only official language of their country, for the Berber dialects—in their opinion—are but minor idioms without any cultural value.

How that small number of urban intellectuals is going to carry out such an anti-Berber program in a Berber region, is hard to say. But one thing is clear: at the first attempt of those Tetuan hotheads to turn their high-ringing slogans into action, swarms of the mountainous tribes will descend upon Tetuan to make short order of the Arab chauvinists.

Among the minor nationalist parties of Spanish Morocco are "The Moorish National Party," under the leadership of Abdul Halek Torres and the "Bureau de Defense Nationaliste," sponsored by Ibrahim el Quazzani. All the non-Berber nationalists of Spanish Morocco are outspokenly anti-French, their aim being to unite the whole territory of Morocco under a "mild" protectorate of Spain. In other

words, they represent a Spanish Irredentism rather than a genuine nationalist movement.

As placed against the background of the nationalist awakening of the Arabs in Asia, the Maghreb seems to be slumbering. World War II has as yet had but little bearing on the rise of the nationalist temperature in North Africa. For one thing, the Vichy-regime with its concentration camps under the Gestapo's supervision, made it extremely difficult for the natives to stage an uprising. Secondly, the turbulent elements of the Maghreb, cajoled by Nazi-propaganda as well as by the anti-Jewish and anti-Allied policy of Vichy, transformed their nationalist sentiments into hatred toward the Democracies. Such a diversion played well into the hands of the French reactionary Colonials and the German Generals who harnessed these elements for serving the Nazi cause. While the Germans entrenched themselves in Tunisia, a native Arab Legion was formed with the aim of kindling the *jihad* spirit among all Moslems. This Legion, which battled the Allied troops in Tunisia, had the backing of the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem and the blessing of the Bey of Tunis, Sidi Ahmed. This blessing, however, was of little avail, for those "legionnaires" perished in the thick of the fight, and the Bey was deposed after the liberation of Tunisia by the Allied armies.

What will be the status of the Maghreb, is hard to predict. It depends primarily upon the spirit of post-war France as well as upon the broader policies of the United Nations in regard to colonial possessions in general. In the meantime, peace prevails in that vital zone where the most decisive blow was struck at Hitler's world strategy.

Yet, ominous clouds of impending storm are looming on the North-African horizon. The Algerian Moslem Party (Amis du Manifeste et la Liberte, A.M.L.) is pressing its demands in the French Constituent Assembly. Its aim is not complete independence but autonomy as formulated in

the Manifesto of the Algerian People, presented to Gen. DeGaulle on February 10, 1943. This manifesto called for an autonomous Algeria within the French Empire, complete enfranchisement, widened citizenship and recognition of the Arabic as an official language of the country. (Fenhrat Abbas, leader of the A.M.L. and spokesman of "federalism" in the French Constituent Assembly, is convinced that his program alone is bound to bring peace to the Maghreb as well as to the French and the world.)

As against those moderate demands, there rises the cry of "Algeria for Algerians," the slogan of the radical group known as the People's Party (A.P.A.), the erstwhile "North African Star." Their aim is complete independence of Algeria. To check this nationalistic movement, which makes rapid strides under the leadership of Messali Haj, the French seem to be willing to meet the demands of the "moderates" and are even inclined to grant autonomy to Morocco and Tunisia so as to enable the eventual formation of a North African Federation within the "*French Union*."

Sawdust "Protector of Islam"

When the Fascist armies marched into Ethiopia, a crimson-like omen appeared on the world-horizon; it was Mussolini's day dream of a New Roman Empire that produced the prelude to World War II. His cry for "*Mare Nostrum*" most emphatically challenged British hegemony in the Mediterranean. The "sawdust Caesar" threatened to shake down the pillars of the British Empire, for, as he put it, the Italian people were kept prisoners in their own lake. Fascist propaganda blared with stories about the growing might of Mussolini's air and sea power. In those days of Fascist upswing, everyone seemed to believe that Italy was becoming the master of the Mediterranean. The hundreds of ships passing the Suez in 1935 could not but convince everyone of the Fascist determination to make good Mussolini's threats. The British seemed stirred and perturbed; the Arabs impressed and excited. Nowhere was this nervousness so evident as along the Nile. I recall a characteristic episode I witnessed in the autumn of 1936, while visiting Egypt. In one of Alexandria's cafes there was a crowd gathered around an Italian gentleman who was engaged in a political discussion with some Egyptian intellectuals. After a flowery description of *Il Duce's* prowess he boasted: "Hundreds of our speedy planes, scores of fine submarines lurking in *Mare Nostrum*, our deadly torpedo boats and millions of well trained troops — all this spells doom for Great Britain." His listeners, mostly Egyptian students, cheered him wildly in an Eastern manner, while the only Briton present there kept on biting his pipe apprehensively.

After the conquest of Ethiopia Great Britain's life-line seemed all the more threatened. Mussolini acquired a base from which he was able to strike against the Sudan, Egypt, and the British Somaliland, and thus to menace the Suez Canal and Aden. The triumph of Fascist arms forced the British to grant independence to Egypt. This was the first blow dealt by Mussolini to British prestige and British "imperial communications." In the ensuing period, Chamberlain's Britain became ever more jittery over the Mediterranean situation. Mussolini's triumphal ride across Libya particularly heightened those jitters. For the British, being the greatest "Moslem Power," with nearly 100,000,000 Moslems under their rule, had been openly challenged as such by the Fascist leader who declared himself "Protector of Islam." The bombastic spectacle which Balbo staged for his Duce in Tripoli made a deep impression on the excitable natives. The "sawdust Caesar," too, seemed impressed, while benignly accepting the "sword of Islam," presented to him by Libyan chiefs. Pictures of a helmeted and chinny Mussolini were posted everywhere and also distributed among the Arabs in the neighboring countries. Arabic newspapers carrying lengthy descriptions of this "historic" event emphasized Mussolini's declaration of "sympathy for Islam and for Moslems throughout the world."

The die was cast for turning Islam into dynamite against the British Empire. Chamberlain tried to placate the angry Duce by all means. In April 1938, by naively signing a "Gentlemen's Agreement" in Rome, he hoped, as he hoped in Munich, to hamstring an ironclad dictator with a piece of paper. However, it was vain hope, for Mussolini's policy with regard to the Mediterranean and the Arab world had long ago been formulated as running counter to the British interests in that vital zone.

On the charts of Mussolini's Roman Empire there figured, among other prospective colonies, Egypt, Syria and Pales-

tine. Libya, being the only Arab speaking province in Italian hold, was naturally chosen as the center of Mussolini's Moslem activities as well as a springboard of Fascist propaganda for the Moslem world. It was rather a difficult task for the Fascists to single out Libya as a sample or model of a Moslem province under Roman protection, for the kind of protection the Libyans had enjoyed under Il Duce's rule could arouse only horror among the Moslems throughout the world. The record of the quasi protectors in Libya is one of oppression and massacres.

In fairness to Italy, it should not be forgotten that after World War I, Libya was accorded a certain degree of autonomy as provided in the so-called *statuto*. Natives were to become Italian citizens and a local parliament was even to be set up in the backward province of the Ottoman Empire. However, the illiterate natives with no democratic background to their credit, but with a great deal of suspicion and hatred toward the occupants, seemed far from being ready for those democratic innovations. Citizenship of a Christian power was openly resented by the anti-foreign Senussi, whose center and stronghold was Cyrenaica. The *statuto* by no means mitigated their bellicose attitude toward the Italians.

With the advent of the Fascists to power, the dictatorial hand replaced the democratic experiments in Libya. Graziani, who came to govern, or rather pacify, this Moslem province of the rebellious Senussi, immediately displayed his iron hand. Cyrenaica was a hard nut to crack. The zealous Senussi breathed with jihad spirit toward Graziani's men, who were recklessly destroying their blooming oases and centers of worship. Merciless bombings, wholesale executions, and massacres at large marked the path of Graziani's resolute campaign against the rebels. Stories were circulating about cementing the precious wells in that desert land, with the apparent aim of extermi-

nating the Senussi by thirst. Other stories related the atrocities of the Fascists, who were said to have disposed of the leaders of the rebellion by dashing them out to the earth from airplanes flying at high altitude. Those and other stories, whether true or not, failed, however, to exhort the Moslems across the frontier to undertake some common action in order to save their co-religionists in Libya. Even adjacent Egypt was not stirred by those atrocities. And the Egyptians lacked no evidence of the plight of their fellow Moslems, for just across their frontiers they could plainly see the barbed wire entanglements stretching for hundreds of miles, that protective belt devised by Graziani to bar the escape route for the rebels. Whether or not the Fascists sacked Libya to such a horrible extent that its populace dropped from 1,500,000 to 650,000, is hard to ascertain, but it would seem highly probable that the population of Libya decreased by 50% after the Italians set foot on this African soil.

There are, however, some bright spots, too, in the gloomy picture of Libya. After the Senussi rebellion had been utterly quelled in 1932, the masters of Libya made it a point of Fascist honor and efficacy to build up the desolate province as a model colony. The Italians, being good colonizers and diligent workers, turned thousands of desert-acres into blooming settlements, for themselves, of course. But the natives, too, were given aid in rebuilding and bettering their settlements. Excellent roads were constructed. Modern hospitals were built. So were schools and mosques. Special care was taken of the mosques, whose number increased considerably after 1932. This was a distinct feature of Mussolini's pro-Islam policy. Thousands of natives were trained as colonial troops with a view to arousing their religious zeal against prospective foes of the Fascists. This policy came to pay dividends during the Ethiopian campaign as the Libyan native troops (Askari)

fought eagerly against the Coptic Christians of Haile Selassie's kingdom. The Fascist dictator of Christian Rome did not hesitate, for political reasons, to carry Islam into Ethiopia and to suppress his own coreligionists there. By declaring Arabic as one of the official languages in conquered Ethiopia as well as by elevating Harar to a center of Moslem teachings, Mussolini played his game well, for the Ulema of Tripoli came to forget his massacres perpetrated against their own kin and made peace with their oppressor who so brazenly assumed the title of "Protector of Islam."

To turn Moslem sentiments against the British, Mussolini fully exploited the waves of his radio station at Bari. This station, once famous for its programs in all Balkan languages, was put to pour out anti-British tirades in Arabic, harping, of course, on Moslem sentiments. Arabic songs and poems usually preceded the newscast, which was so arranged and colored as to inflame the Moslems against their British "oppressors." The anti-British and anti-French tone was particularly caustic after the "Sanctions" adopted by the League of Nations against Mussolini's aggression. Udo Dadoni, representative of the Fascist "Agence d'Egypte," saw to it that the programs in Arabic stirred and impressed the imagination of the Arab listeners. On one hand British "atrocities" in Áden, Egypt, and in Palestine were fanfared, and on the other, French "subjugation" of the Moslems in North Africa was brought to the attention of the Moslem world. Of course, those exaggerated and mostly false accusations sounded quite perfidious as voiced by the Fascist masters of Libya, but let us not forget that any anti-foreign propaganda in Moslem countries was bound to produce some degree of success. In addition, much emphasis was laid in the Bari programs on the weakness and decline of the British Empire. The Fascists boasted that the "obsolete" British navy had not dared challenge

the modern Italian warships which crossed the Mediterranean freely during the Ethiopian "incident." The Arab-speaking peoples seemed to believe in those stories. Their conviction of British impotence in comparison to Fascist prowess as displayed in Ethiopia was ever more enhanced by British yielding to the Egyptian nationalists in 1935, and particularly by the conspicuous failure of the British soldiers to suppress the riots in Palestine.

Fascist propaganda among the Moslems was not confined merely to the radio waves. Italian agents were busy all over the Arab World, trying to win Arab malcontents by means of *bakhshish*. Bakhshish, or bribe, is known to work miracles in the Near East. It is much more efficient than any other medium of persuasion. The Italian agents found in Egypt a very fertile ground for their propaganda.

For one thing, the Royal Palace had always been on good terms with Italy. While still Prince, Ahmed Fuad, King of Egypt, had spent most of his years in Italy. As an autocratically minded monarch he admired the Fascist form of government. Furthermore, the powerful Italian colony in Alexandria, enjoying full freedom, was groomed by the Fascist agents as a prospective "Fifth Column." The Italian newspaper *Il Giornalo d'Oriente* appearing in Alexandria disseminated Fascist propaganda throughout the Near East. Even the *Al-Abram*, that "Arabic Times," being the best of all Arab newspapers, embarked upon a pro-Fascist policy. Not only did very lengthy "reports" on the war in Ethiopia appear in that paper — accounts that were actual translations of the Italian Stefani Agency reports, but also the editorials of the *Al-Abram* often commented favorably on the conquest of Ethiopia. Such things could not have occurred without "bakhshish," or "subsidy," putting it euphemistically. With the aid of the very active Italian ambassador, Mazzolini, Fascist agents wormed their way

into the Wafd and other political parties of Egypt. There was in Egypt a Fascist youth organization known as "The Green Shirts." Even the Wafd had its youth organizations modeled on the Fascist pattern. This foremost party in Egypt, which claimed to champion the cause of democracy, harbored the Fascist "Blue Shirts."

Also in Palestine Fascist money poured into the pockets of the Arab editors. The Arab newspapers there received aid in the form of free news releases, or advertisements or direct subsidies. The Arab terrorists too benefited from the Fascist bakhshish. The slogan "ad-Dola mafish" (the government does not exist), so popular among the Palestinian Arabs during the riots of 1936, may be traced to Italian propaganda harping on British impotence.

Pro-Fascist leanings were also discernible in the Arabic press of Syria. Small bribes and "subsidies" granted to editors and journalists accounted for the Fascist tendency in the Syrian press. The Italians also succeeded in bribing one of the most prominent Arabs of Syria, Amir Shakib Arslan, head of the Arab Bureau in Geneva. There was conspicuously a too large number of Italian "friends" in Syria as the "Pan-Arab" Congress was held at Bludan, in September 1937. The delegates enjoyed themselves splendidly, lavishly spending their bakhshish-money. The "*quawmis*," or members of the Syrian Fascist organization, paraded in the streets of Damascus shouting anti-British, anti-French, and anti-Jewish slogans. Those militarily trained youths proudly wore an emblem resembling the swastika and hailed their own "Duce," called *Za'im*.

Mussolini's agents were very active in Iraq, bribing all they could, not excluding the officers of the General Staff. But in this country, which was earmarked by the Nazis as their exclusive zone of influence, the Italians merely served their German masters, who, as we shall see, were to reap a golden harvest in their subversive activities.

The traditionally friendly relations between the Yaman and Italy became even more cordial after the Ethiopian "incident." Imam Yahya was the first to recognize this conquest, for which he received precious gifts from Il Duce. Even Ibn Sa'ud was not left out of Mussolini's schemes, for a shining Italian airplane arrived once as a present for Abdul-Aziz on his birthday.

Italy's prestige in the Near East ran high as a result of Mussolini's propaganda and Fascist gold. It rose into high gear when Mussolini declared war on Great Britain and France. His dream of a Roman Empire with Egypt, Syria and Palestine as colonies seemed within his reach. Radio Bari fanfared loudly, promising the Arabs a Pan-Arab State comprising Syria, Palestine and Iraq. The Arabs were called to revolt and throw off the British and Jewish yoke. After the arrival of the Italian Armistice Commission in Syria, Mussolini's agents became even bolder in their subversive activities. Italian women dressed as nuns went among the Arabs distributing pornographic photographs showing Jews torturing and mutilating Arab men and women. Imprisoned Arab agents in Syria were released upon Italian intervention. Among others, were Nahib Bey Al-Azmi, chief smuggler of arms into Palestine and Izzat Darwaza, one of Haj Amin al Hussaini's henchmen.

The fiery appeals to the Arabs mounted to a high pitch as Graziani's army was marching from Libya to attack Egypt. When his armored forces stood at Solum, the Egyptian army retreated ever deeper into the interior, in compliance with the government's orders not to resist the invaders. Utter defeat of the British along the Nile was a matter of realistic policy on the part of the Egyptians. Rumors, not entirely unfounded, were circulated among the Arabs to the effect that the British were outnumbered by the Italians ten to one. The Egyptians and the Arabs in general were ready to receive their new masters. So

certain were the Fascists of their victory over the British that they had taken special care to assemble behind the lines a sufficient supply of Mussolini's busts to be displayed in Cairo and Alexandria. Mazzolini, the Italian ambassador to Egypt, is said to have left his limousine in his garage at Cairo, hoping to return there in no time.

But — there occurred a miracle along the Nile. General Wavell's smashing counter-attack sent Graziani's heroes reeling back beyond Benghazi. Instead of a victorious Italian army marching into Egypt, there were hundreds of thousands of weary Italian prisoners taking the *via dolorosa* toward the Pyramids. Italian reverses in Greece completely blasted Fascist prestige among the Arabs. The would-be "Protector of Islam" was beaten disgracefully, his "sword of Islam" having been shattered to pieces. He stood no chance to regain the favor of Allah, for the Arabs have no respect for people defeated in battle. Gone was Mussolini's exciting dream of a Moslem Empire under the protection of Fascist Rome. He probably visualized that bright moment when the muezzins of the mosques at the Holy City of Cairo would glorify the name of their new Protector, in case of a Fascist victory. Instead, he himself needed protection more badly than the Moslems.

It was on March 27, 1939, that Mussolini boasted before his *Squadristi*: "No matter how things go, we wish to hear no more about brotherhood, sisterhood, cousins, and such other bastard relationships because relations between states are relations of force and these relations of force are the determining elements of their policy." Indeed, it was these relations of force that called upon Adolph Hitler to take his beaten colleague under the wings of his protection. When General Rommel, "the fox of the desert," marshalled his panzers in Libya, the Nazis proudly hoisted the swastika that henceforth was to "protect" the Crescent.

Hitler's "Drang nach Süd-osten"

Graziani's debacle in Libya gave Hitler an opportunity actually to take over the job of "protecting" Islam. Not only did the Nazis believe that their "invincible" panzers would roll victoriously into the streets of Cairo, and would thereby convince the Moslems of Teutonic ability to "protect" them, but they were likewise certain that the "master-race," unlike the inefficient Italians, knew precisely how to handle the Arab problem "according to plan." The haphazard propaganda of the Italians in the Arab East, their inability to win over the "bigwigs" of the Arab world, undoubtedly were again to prove German superiority in diplomacy and strategy. For the Germans as a people of *Weltanschauung* were by no means amateurs or newcomers, so far as the Near East is concerned. The Germans, and not the Italians, had conceived the idea of "Drang nach Osten"; the Germans had built the "scientific edifice of Geopolitics"; and the Germans had more "Arabists" than any other nation in Europe. Therefore, according to all principles of logic, the Germans were the chosen protectors of the Moslems.

It may be remembered that since the Teutonic Knights began their mission in Prussia, the boundaries of Germany were ever extended eastward. The "Drang nach Osten" had, on one hand, a romantic touch in that it had stressed the cultural mission of the German people as against the uncivilized Slavs, but on the other hand, it set its feet on the ground by extensive colonization work and other forms of economic penetration into non-German lands. Kaiser Wil-

helm ramified that *Drang* by creating a "Suedosten" branch through the Balkans toward Mesopotamia. By obtaining the concession for building the Baghdad railway and by gaining in 1912, 25% in the "Turkish Petroleum Company," the Germans were well on their way of carrying their *Kultur* into the Arab World as well as of quenching their oil-thirst. However, German defeat in World War I made them lose both objectives.

The Germans also failed to win over the Arabs, although they ranked first in Arabic studies. It would require much space only to enumerate the first-rate scholars who contributed classic works in Islam studies. Although many of those German scholars were not Aryans, their works have been regarded as German contributions. Among the foremost German Arabists prior to World War I, the following gained world fame: August Mueller, the great historian of Islam; J. Wellhausen, author of a classic book on the Omayyad Empire; Ignaz Goldziher, foremost authority on Moslem law; Von Kremer, keen analyst of Arab culture; Th. Noeldeke, one of the world's greatest experts on the Koran; C. Brockelmann, renowned historian of Arab literature; A. Socin, Arab grammarian. This is but a negligible fraction of a long list of German Arabists.

The number of outstanding oriental societies in Germany was quite considerable, only to mention the "Morgenlaendische Gesellschaft" and its high standard publication "Zeitschrift der Morgenlaendischen Gesellschaft" (ZDMG), the "Deutsche Orientverein," "Deutsche Gessellschaft fuer Islamkunde," and many others.

Despite that oriental prolificness of Imperial Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm's Knights made but little headway in wooing the Arabs, whose religion, culture and language they had studied so eagerly and thoroughly. As in their philosophy, the Germans embraced the "absolute" rather than the empiricism, in their Oriental studies. This quest for the

"absolute" and the proverbial *deutsche Puenktlichkeit* perhaps explain the fact that Max Oppenheim, oriental secretary to the German legation in Egypt, though far better versed in Arabic than Th. E. Lawrence, failed to dissuade his friend, Amir Faisal, from breaking away from the Sultan.

In the years of tension preceding World War II, the Nazis revised Kaiser Wilhelm's "Drang nach Osten," putting it in the framework of a new "absolute" known as "Geopolitics." As the champion of the master-race, Hitler would make no alliance with the Moslems, for as he stated in "Mein Kampf" (p. 526): "The racial inferiority of the so-called 'oppressed' nations is in itself enough to prevent me from linking the destiny of my people with that of inferior races." Speaking of some representatives of Moslem countries who tried to approach him, he stated: "They impressed me as gabbling pompositives without any realistic background." Thus spoke, of course, Hitler, the "apostle," prior to 1933. But Karl Haushofer, the master of Geopolitics, tried to be practical. Realizing that the Near East is "the joint between the Atlantic and Pacific spaces," (*Zeitschrift fuer Geopolitik*, Vol. XVIII) whence Germans could drive out the British from the "Eurasian continent," Karl Haushofer devoted much space in his periodical to the Moslem problem. One of his experts, Hans Lindermann, in an article "Der Islam im Aufbruch und Angriff" (*ZFG*, Vol. XVI) speaks of a "revitalized Orient," emphasizing the *realpolitik* of Pan-Islam and Pan-Arabism. Thus, on the wings of Geopolitics, came Hitler to discover the "realistic background" of Moslem "pompositives," as he dispatched propagandists to the Near and Middle East. Of course, in taking this step, he still would not link the destiny of his people to those "inferior races," but he would gladly harness the slavepower of the same races to shape Germany's destiny for the next thousand years.

The Nazis began expanding their "living-space" by economic penetration into the Southeast. In a period of several years they succeeded in conquering the markets of the Balkans and in subjugating their currencies to the Reichsmark. Owing to the fiendish device of the barter system, the Nazis were "buying" at high prices the surplus products of the small nations, selling them in Western Europe for cash, below world prices. These transactions were quite profitable to the Germans, who traded the "surplus products" for manufactured goods at prices fixed by themselves. All kinds of machines, chiefly defective, radios, alarm clocks, bicycles, and minor articles, mostly useless, were dumped into the Balkans and beyond, to all countries of the Near and Middle East. In the years 1932-1939 German export to the Near East boasted fivefold increase. Dr. Hjalmar Schacht's economic mission in 1936 to the Southeast marks the trails of Nazi Germany's economic "Drang nach Sued-osten." Budapest — Belgrade — Sophia — Athens — Ankara — Baghdad and Teheran were soon to feel the impact of that penetration. Trade agreements dictated by Dr. Schacht brought those countries ever closer into the Nazi snarl. Following Dr. Schacht's mission, hosts of traders and technicians flocked into this prospective area of Nazi living space. Those "technicians" included doctors, engineers, orientalists, saboteurs and spies at large. Egypt, Syria and Palestine were not omitted, either. In Egypt a large clearance house helped distribute Nazi goods in the Near East. Owing to the fact that Jewish emigrants from Germany to Palestine were forced to exchange their property and savings for German-made goods, Palestine, too, amply enjoyed the "blessings" of the Nazi barter.

In 1937 there followed a "cultural" mission, headed by the Nazi youth leader, Baldur von Schirach. This conspicuously large mission was but an espionage expedition with

a view to contacting eventual leaders of the Arab pro-Nazi youths. Baldur von Schirach was given wide publicity while visiting Egypt, but had to cut his visit short, for the British felt too strongly those Nazi straws blowing along the Nile.

Meanwhile at home the Nazis were busy hitching their Orientalists to their sabotage chariot. "Islamischer Kulturbund" of Vienna made contacts with various Moslem leaders through its president, Baron Omar Rudolf von Ehrenfels who, by assuming Islam, was supposed to play a German Philby. The "Deutsche Kolonialdienst" of Nuremberg saw to it that hundreds of students went to the Moslem countries for "special duties." On the other hand, the "Arab Club" in Berlin was founded, an organization which marshaled native Arabs as a nucleus of a Gestapo for their homelands. The "Arab School for Higher Politics" trained spies and liaison officers, liberally offering free passage and stipends to Arab students from across the Mediterranean. And above all, there was the "Arab Bureau" in Berlin which handled the propaganda in the Arab East. The Nazis took pains even to provide their Arabs with a mosque at Wilmersdorf, near Berlin.

The prospects for fomenting serious disturbances, or even revolts in the Arab East seemed to the Nazis bright indeed, for they had no special need of creating trouble-spots in regions where trouble actually existed. Palestine, Syria, and Iraq, by virtue of their turbulent situation, invited spear-headers of any description, provided they could "shoot words like bullets" and furnish money and weapons. This the Nazis could afford, by all means. Under the guidance of the Nazi super-spy, German ambassador to Turkey, Franz von Pappen, a ramified spy-organization was set up with cells all over the Near and Middle East. German consulates and legations served as centers of all subversive activities. The first step, of course, was contacting the Arab

newspapers. The Nazi news agency D.N.B. offered free service. Profuse advertisements followed, and finally subsidies, more lavishly granted than by their Fascist colleagues, brought most of the Arab newspapers within Nazi hold. The next step the Germans took in carrying out their scheme for the Arab East was subsidizing subversive organizations which operated under cover of literary clubs. In so doing the Nazi agents hoped to win leaders for their planned revolt. One of those clubs *Nadi al-Arabi* of Damascus was known to harbor Syrian terrorists and to operate a clandestine short-wave station, the "Arab Unity Station" which was broadcasting Nazi propaganda. A similar club called *al-Muttana* was founded in Baghdad by one Asib Shawkat, who had received his training in Berlin. The headquarters of this club were furnished and equipped by the Nazi consulate.

But, unlike the Italians, who contented themselves with poor results, the Germans were looking for greater things. They spent money only where prospects of real shooting seemed in sight. Palestine was, no doubt, the ideal spot for a prelude to greater things to come. In 1937 great quantities of German made hand grenades, land mines, rifles and other ammunitions were discovered in the hideouts of the Arab terrorists. German officers instructed the Arab bands in guerilla warfare. The flow of German supplies streamed from Aqaba, Iraq and Syria. In Syria, too, there was a great deal of shooting in 1936, as the extreme nationalists staged riots in Damascus to protest against the French reluctance to grant independence to Syria. The Nazis worked alongside the Italians in subsidizing the *quawmis* (extreme nationalists).

While Palestine and Syria were chosen by the Nazis as a preliminary springboard for anti-British propaganda, Iraq was to become the center of their "Drang nach Osten" because of its rich oil fields and its strategic position in re-

lation to other Arab speaking countries. Therefore, an ace-orientalist was sent there as the Reich's minister, in the person of Dr. Fritz Grobba, who made friends with the most influential leaders of Iraq. His assistant, Dr. Hans Jordan, took care of the "small fry." Their destructive propaganda produced results in 1939, as King Ghazi was killed while racing on his motorcycle. The gentlemen of the German legation in their propaganda campaign strongly hinted a Biritish hand in the King's death. As a result of that campaign the British Consul was killed at Mossul.

Fritz Grobba worked in close collaboration with Von Henting, chief of the Near Eastern Bureau of the Nazi Foreign office and with the aged Baron Max von Oppenheim, who very skillfully prepared inflammatory pamphlets and leaflets in Arabic. This was the Orientalist trio charged with the task of staging in the Arab East something greater than T. E. Lawrence had staged during World War I.

The Nazis worked "according to plan." Even in radio propaganda they outdid their Italian colleagues. The Bari programs were regarded by the German Arabists as poor and unimpressive. In 1938 the powerful short wave station at Zeesen, near Berlin, began broadcasting in Arabic. After the outbreak of World War II, those broadcasts became ever violent and provocative. From under the wings of the Aryan swastika were flowing, in rhythmical cadences, verses of the Semitic Koran. Arabic songs sung by natives were designed to whip up patriotism among the listeners. But the core of those programs was usually the vociferous news cast full of atrocity stories allegedly perpetrated by the British and the Jews. These stories were properly blended to suit the taste and fantasy of the sex-minded Levantine. Raping Arab women and hanging Arab men by their testicles were classical examples of propaganda, which in the opinion of Dr. Sa'id al Iman, head of the Arab Bureau in Berlin, could impress and incite his fellow Arabs. Hitler,

of course, was eulogized in those broadcasts as a "direct descendent of the Prophet who was born with a green belt around his middle." Those German Arabists were even trying to sell to the Moslems the idea of Hitler's messenger-ship, for they frequently harped on the slogan: "Bissama Allah uwala ardh Hitler," In heaven — Allah, and on earth — Hitler.

How many Arabs were listening to those broadcasts, and how effectively that kind of propaganda worked, is hard to ascertain. The small number of receiving sets in the Near East does not make for a large audience. But there were a great many Arabs, especially in the towns, who enjoyed the star-announcer over the Zeesen-radio, Yunis al-Bahri, an Iraqi journalist, whom Allah had endowed with a highly dramatic voice.

On the whole, however, Nazi propaganda backed by great sums of gold and buttressed by the successes of their "invincible" *Wehrmacht*, brought some tangible results. The grand prize the Nazis won in Iraq was the General Staff of the Iraqi Army, whose members pledged themselves to stage an anti-British revolt at Berlin's command. They also won an ace-agent in the person of the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Hussaini, and scores of other Arab leaders who for bountiful bakhshish were ready to serve the Nazi master. The ex-Mufti topped them all as an experienced incendiary. Hitler could use him well to fan Pan-Islam sentiments, if necessary. With Rashid Ali al-Ghailani, Iraqi Minister in German pay, the Nazis were able to ride the Pan-Arab horse, should the time come for such a move. And as far as Fauzi al-Kaukaji is concerned, he was to be groomed as the supreme leader of Arab guerrilla bands and eventual Gestapo chief for the Arab East.

Thus the stage was set for a spectacular display of Nazi might where the Ayran swastika was to flutter above the

Semitic Crescent. A powerful "Fifth Column," led by three Arab aces, was ready to strike when Hitler commanded, in order to help the great oppressor in his conquest of the "joint between the Atlantic and the Pacific spaces."

The Mufti's Frozen Fifth Column

The startling story of the Arab Fifth Column will perhaps be told at length when the archives of World War II are freely accessible to the historian. Within the framework of this narrative suffice it to record some facts which, we believe, will not only shed ample light on Arab mentality, but will also bring to our attention a forgotten, or perhaps silenced, episode of this war.

After the fall of France, the Near East became the most vital and vulnerable zone in Allied world strategy. Threatened by the Nazi pincers aimed at the Caucasus on one hand and by Rommel's panzers in Libya on the other, the Allies found themselves in a precarious situation. They were painfully aware that had Hitler succeeded in breaking through this arc, he would have decisively tipped the scales of victory in his favor. Such a break-through, if accomplished, would have meant much more than the conquest of the rich oil fields of Iraq and Iran, plus the whole yield of Egypt's cotton; it would have opened a byway to the Caucasus and a highway to India, and would have brought about a junction with Japan. Hitler's ever-closing pincers, threatening as they were, seemed all the more intimidating because this vital arc, which staved off the Nazi pincers from closing, had been infected with guerilla bands organized by Arab Quislings. Behind the Allied lines, at crossroads and strategic points there loomed thousands of well-trained snipers, ready to strike at a moment's notice.

The harbinger and chieftain of the Fifth Column in the Near East was Haj Amin al-Hussaini, the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem. His story as arch-Quisling dates back, as we know, to the days of the Ethiopian "incident" when Mussolini had proclaimed himself "Protector of Islam." Professional spies and hirelings, recruited from the Arab malcontents, spread seeds of revolt among the natives. Palestine, Syria, and Iraq became fertile soil for anti-British sentiments. Mussolini's agents aided by Hitler's experts were doing the work under the very noses of the British officials. Revolt was brewing everywhere. And the arch-plotter was Haj Amin al-Hussaini, who enjoyed the status of *sacrosanctus* in Jerusalem. Well paid by the British government as head of the Moslem Council, the Mufti had also at his disposal ample funds of the religious endowments (Waqf). He was the actual organizer of the so-called "Arab revolt" in Palestine that lasted from April 1936 to the very outbreak of World War II. It was he who hired Fauzi Kaukaji, terror chieftain of Iraq, who came to Palestine to fight the British and the Jews. Although the Royal Commission under Lord Peel branded the Mufti as chief instigator of the massacres, he managed to dodge British surveillance, having been immune in the Mosque Al-Aqsa of Jerusalem. The British police and Military Command were reluctant to put him behind bars and quell the uprising. Fauzi Kaukaji escaped mysteriously despite the fact that the small country of Palestine was densely dotted with British patrols. Of course, it was possible for such things to have happened because of the "tolerant" attitude of the Palestine Administration in the years of Chamberlain's appeasement era. Nowadays we properly appraise the real character of that revolt.

There was a well organized *Fifth Column* in the Near East long before Munich. A military rehearsal, so to

speak. When things became too hot even for the cold tempered British, and after Gen. Wavell came to Palestine to restore order, the Mufti managed to sneak out and escape to Syria where he continued to foster unrest. Although the French in Syria kept a vigilant eye on the Mufti, he spread his net of treachery all over the country. Later he fled to Iraq, that hornets' nest of intrigues in the Near East. There he found his associates, like Fauzi Kaukaji, Rashid al-Gailani and a bribed clique of officers on the Iraq Military Staff.

After Graziani's collapse in Africa, when Hitler took over the job of protecting Islam, Haj Amin al-Hussaini was again in the fore. As a result of his instigation, with the aid of Nazi agents, the British Consul in Mossul was killed, and a strong pro-Axis clique took over the government in Iraq. On the very day Benghazi was evacuated by the British, on April 3, 1941, Rashid Ali al-Gailani performed the coup d'etat and proclaimed himself premier. Thus began the Iraqi revolt. It was inaugurated in the best Nazi traditions by staging progroms on the Jews of Baghdad and looting Jewish property. Rashid al-Gailani was backed by the so-called "Four of the Golden Square." They were Salah ad-Din as Sabbagh, commander of the Iraqi Western Army; Kamil Shabib, commander of the First Division; Col. Fahmi Sa'ud, commander of the mechanized forces; and Col. Mahmud Salman, chief of the Air Force. This bloody revolt, with which Iraq had confronted the Allies during the invasion of Crete, was quelled after bitter fighting which lasted three weeks.

The Axis established advance bases at Aleppo, Palmyra and Damascus, while the waters off Cyprus were mined. The small British force at the Habbaniya airfield held out heroically until reinforcements arrived from the head of the Persian Gulf as well as from Palestine. Simultaneously the

British R.A.F. relentlessly attacked Axis troops moving from Syria. The situation was extremely dangerous at Mossul, where Nazi planes succeeded in getting control of the oil fields. Because this revolt exploded, for some reason, ahead of schedule and had, therefore, a slim chance of success, the Nazis decided to blow up the much coveted oil wells in the Mossul area. However, the demolition squad, which was on its way to accomplish this destructive mission, was surprised and wiped out by a Jewish unit from Palestine under the leadership of David Raziel.

After Baghdad had been captured by the British, Col. Salah ad-Din, Fahmi Sa'ud and Mahmud Salman were sentenced to death, but those sentences were never carried out. The Mufti, al-Gailani and other associates succeeded in getting away. Haj Amin surely missed one of his greatest opportunities, for the Iraqi government had been exceptionally good to him. The Iraqi Parliament had voted \$72,000 for his political work, and besides, he received \$4,000 monthly from the Iraqi secret service.

The "General Staff" of the Fifth Column in the Near East managed to escape to Iran carrying the torch of revolt further to the East. However, through the combined actions of Great Britain and Russia bloodshed was avoided in Iran. And again, Hitler's ace-agent, Haj-Amin al-Hussaini slipped through the military cordons of the British. He arrived safely in Italy, whence he took his pilgrimage to the Mecca of Nazidom. The Holy turban did not prevent him from shaking hands with the infidel Hitler. Upon his arrival in Berlin, the Mufti broadcast in Arabic the following appeal to his fellow Moslems: "Salaam Aleikum, children of Allah, Moslems of the World; this is your leader talking to you wherever you may be. This is Amin al-Hussaini calling on you in the name of Allah, besides whom there is no God and Muhammad is his messenger, to take up arms in this *jihad* (Holy War) against

the infidel British who want to subdue all children of Allah and kill all his soldiers, and against the cunning Jews who desire to rob you of your sanctuaries and rebuild their Temple on the ruins of our Mosque of Omar in al-Quds. Children of Allah, this is a Holy War for the glory and honor of Allah, the merciful and beneficent. If you die in this war, you will sit in Heaven on the right side of the Prophet. Children of Allah, I call on you to fight. *Heil Hitler.*”

As a servant of his Aryan master, the alleged scion of a Semitic prophet, Haj-Amin al-Hussaini, even organized legions who were supposed to fight in Russia and Tunisia. Coached and supported by the Palestinian born German, the top-notch Nazi agent, Carl Eichmann, he served the Nazis well. He was especially helpful in suggesting effective means of exterminating his “Semitic cousins.” He and Carl Eichmann are the bloody partners who distinguished themselves in setting up the death camps and gas-chambers for millions of helpless Jews. Thus far this war-criminal has escaped the hand of justice. Captured by the American troops in Germany, the Mufti for some unexplained reasons, was handed over to the French. For many months he was living comfortably in a villa near Paris. Yugoslavia was the only country to list Haj Amin as a war-criminal, but its government did not insist on his trial. Under most mysterious circumstances he escaped in a British or American plane and landed in Cairo. There he was granted refuge in the palace of King Farouk. Despite vigorous protests of many democratic organizations the world over, nothing has been done to bring the Mufti to trial.

According to an Associated Press dispatch to the *New York Times* of August 18, 1946, his war guilt was definitely established on the basis of German records. A part of this most sensational dispatch reads: “The Mufti of

Jerusalem Haj Amin el Husseini, now sheltered by the Egyptian Government, participated for at least three years in Axis plans to sabotage the Allied war effort in the Near East, captured German records disclosed tonight. The dreaded Abwehr, Germany's counter-intelligence service, described the Mufti in its secret report as an intimate collaborator in planning anti-Allied dynamitings and revolts in Arab lands.

These reports said the white-bearded Moslem religious leader had conferred in Berlin on July 13, 1942, with the highest officers of the Abwehr. He was quoted as having demanded that all followers of his 'Arab Freedom Movement' be committed then to carrying out the Abwehr program. He was told that the Abwehr would have to confer with the Italian intelligence service before undertaking such an expansion of its existing staff for Arab agents.

On August 30, 1942, the Mufti had obtained the appointment of his representative, Said Hamil, as liaison officer between the German Army and Moslem tribes in the Soviet Caucasus. He sent a Moslem priest to accompany five German agents in a parachute jump behind the Soviet lines southeast of Grozny for a sabotage operation known in code as Mohammed.

The reports emphasized the close relationship of the Mufti with Rashid Ali el Gailani, former Iraqi Premier, whose Baghdad revolt in May, 1941, was coached but weakly supported by the Hitler Government.

An Abwehr agent, Captain von Ewert, was sent to Iraq, disguised as a Rumanian business man, to carry on relations with the Mufti and prepare for Rashid Ali's uprising, which followed several months later.

When the British reoccupied Baghdad, the Abwehr happily noted that the Mufti had managed to flee to Iran. He received refuge in the Japanese Legation in Teheran be-

cause the German Legation was about to be seized by British and Soviet authorities and was not an ideal hiding place for a pro-Axis personality. In the winter of 1941 Major Marwede of the Abwehr was regularly assigned to the Mufti's staff to facilitate future operations."

The ex-Mufti with the aid of Axis gold pieces exerted preponderant influence over all the Arab World. Even in Transjordan, where the pro-British Amir Abdullah rules, the Mufti's agents succeeded in winning the Amir's son, Talal, over to the Axis camp. Talal is believed to have tried to capture the arsenal of his father in order to help Rashid al-Gailani in Iraq.

Another episode which proves how deeply Nazi poison penetrated Arab minds is the fact that the Arab "Transjordan Frontier Force" rebelled at the borders of Iraq when called upon to fight the Axis-staged rebellion in Iraq. This Arab Legion, trained and equipped by the British, refused to use its weapons against dangerous rebels, and went so far as to threaten their commanding officers with machine guns; consequently, they had to be returned to Transjordan.

As for Fifth Column activities in Syria, it may be recalled that the hostile attitude of the native population toward the Allied cause made it possible for Gen. Denz to put up a stiff fight against the combined British and Free French invasion forces. Previously, it was the strong Fifth Column elements that collaborated whole-heartedly with the Italian and German Armistice Commission, thus enabling the establishing of spy and saboteur rings right across the Palestinian border. This collaboration was responsible for the smuggling of Nazi planes, equipment and technicians to Syria whence they were ferried to the rebels in Iraq. The pro-Axis spirit of the Arabs in Syria was kindled by their native son, Dr. Sa'id al Iman, the head of the Arab Bureau

in Berlin, who made the Arab broadcasts from Zeesen as Goebbels-like as possible. The Nazi trio that operated in Syria consisted of Roland Eilaender, a Syrian German, Fräulein Paula Koch, who was supposed to play the role of a Nazi Gertrude Bell, and Rudolf Rosen, a keyman in the German espionage network. That Syria was to take a foremost place in the Nazi plans for the Near East, is proved by the fact that von Henting himself arrived there in January, 1941, to supervise the Fifth Column activities. After the occupation of Syria all those Nazi agents moved across the border to Iskandarun, having been safe on Turkish territory.

Nor has the Fifth Column in Egypt written a glorious page in the records of Egypt's behavior during this war. King Farouk and his Court had always displayed strong leanings toward Italy. Count Mazzolini was his best friend. The Egyptian government had much too long refused to sever diplomatic relations with Italy, and had thus enabled the Italian legation in Cairo to serve as a center of Nazi espionage for the Near East. Ali Maher Pasha, then Prime Minister, was forced to resign, having divulged military secrets to the Italians in Tobruk. Many a time Egyptian spokesmen had proclaimed that they would fight if invaded, but they did not. They did not move when Graziani crossed the border; nor did their troops fire a shot when Rommel threatened Alexandria. Abdur Rahman Azzam, member of the cabinet, constantly agitated against declaring war on Italy. When Axis planes bombed the Holy City, Cairo, al-Maraghi, the rector of the al-Azhar University, blamed the British for that. Gen. Aziz Ali el-Masri, Inspector General of the Egyptian Army, was captured in Cairo attempting to flee to the rebels in Iraq with very important documents and photographs. He was imprisoned, but after Nahas Pasha came to power in February 1942, this traitor was released. King Farouk, who would uncork

champagne at every British defeat, is known to have had a hand in all those machinations.

Even Ibn Sa'ud, King of Saudi Arabia, had been oscillating for a long time. Already in 1939 he had sent his special emissary to Hitler, Halid Bey al-Walid, who — according to dispatches of those days — was conferring with the Nazi master about an "armament transaction." True, Ibn Sa'ud did not move against the British. He has rather preferred to sit on the fence, cautiously watching the fateful events, and it may be assumed it was the prestige of the United States and of American legations to Arabia that kept Ibn Sa'ud in line. For the Lord of Arabia had undoubtedly pondered the possibility of breaking away from the British who checked his advance toward a "Greater Arabia." His list of grievances against the British is quite long, only to mention the territorial claims which include Kuwait, the Bahrain Islands, the Trucial States, Masquat, Qatar and Hadhramaut. However, Ibn Sa'ud was not impatient to press those issues only because the United States of America, through the American Standard Oil Company, succeeded in winning a concession for oil exploitation on the very eve of World War II. Ibn Sa'ud's links with the United States were also strengthened by the efforts of Mr. Twitchell, the King's business-partner in the Sa'udi Arabian Mining Syndicate.

Imam Yahya, the master of the Yaman, had long been known as an admirer of Fascist Italy whence he had received costly gifts in arms and gold, but with the ebbing glory of Italy in Africa he, too, was wise enough not to play the Axis game.

Palestine, as the center of the ex-Mufti's activities, naturally harbored the most dangerous Fifth Column in the Near East. Haj Amin al-Hussaini's education for slaughter during the years of 1936-1938 had not been in vain. His well organized gangs were not disarmed by the British

authorities. The volume of modern weapons at their disposal increased immensely after the fall of France. From across the Syrian border transports of precious ammunition were smuggled by the Arabs. Thousands of men trained by Fauzi Kaukaji were eagerly awaiting the Nazi paratroopers from Crete. However, those "Children of Allah" did not strike, because the upheaval in Iraq had been suppressed and the "sky-soldiers" had not descended upon the Holy Land. And for another reason, they desisted. Their eagerness to play the Mufti's game was checked by the presence of the 600,000 strong Jewish population. About 100,000 able-bodied Jews, some of them fairly trained and equipped, stood ready to make short shrift of any anti-Allied uprising. Owing to that fact, the unbelievable had occurred; the Arab Fifth Column in Palestine, which had stirred the world in 1936-38, kept absolutely quiet during the most crucial period for the Allies in the Near East.

Yet the British have not encouraged their only faithful ally in the Near East, the Jews in Palestine. On the contrary, they acted as in the happy days of the infamous appeasement era. In Iran and elsewhere they released members of the Hussaini gang and granted them permission to enter Palestine. Thus the ranks of the Fifth Column in Palestine swelled daily, to the delight of the Axis. Suffice it to mention several leaders as Jamal al Hussaini, Amin Tamini, Musa-al-Alami, Auni Bey-Abdul-Hadi, Dr. Haldi, who would miss no opportunity to arouse their fellow Arabs against the Jews and the British. Yet, they enjoy immunity under British protection.

Reviewing briefly the Fifth Column activities of the Arabs, one cannot but ask the question: whence that rancor of the Arabs toward the democracies, and their eagerness to see the swastika fly over the Moslem Crescent? After all, the Arab-speaking countries that had won their independence as a result of World War I, could not expect a better

lot than that of all Nazi-subjugated countries. The Arab peoples belonging to the "inferior" Semitic race, were certainly earmarked for enslavement or extermination. And yet, an Arab Fifth Column did not hesitate to plunge a dagger into the back of Democracy.

What lies at the bottom of this phenomenon? Lack of democratic traditions is undoubtedly one of the answers. But, many other factors have contributed to the growth of the anti-Western microbe on Arab soil.

The Arab outlook, based upon the Koran, is essentially autocratic. Their concept of government is tantamount to dictatorship. For centuries they have been ruled by despots; and the Koran warns the faithful of grumbling against the despotic ruler, because as cruel as he may be, he still derives his power from Allah. Small wonder that a Hitler, or a Mussolini, appeals to them more than the easy-going, appeasing and retreating English. Their primitive minds admire nothing but might. The victor, regardless of his aims, is always right. Hence their logical trend to side with the winner. Axis propaganda, therefore, fell upon very fertile ground. The radio stations at Bari, Zeesen, Athens and Tokyo, broadcasting anti-British and anti-Jewish programs in Arabic, plus lavish *bakhshish* swayed the Arabs toward the Axis.

Still another factor explains the hostility of the Arabs toward the democracies: the particular character of the so-called national movements among the Arabs. Unlike the Western democratic movements, which were popular in essence, being an outgrowth of modern education and technology, the Arab "National" movements are largely mirages, and in reality a political weapon of cliques, wealthy families, dynasties and rugged individuals. The bulk of the Arab population in the Near East is still illiterate, for even in the most civilized country, Egypt, illiteracy amounts to 90%. The Arab rulers of the Near East owe

their might to the social and industrial backwardness of their countries as well as to the anti-democratic policies of the British Colonial Office.

Those plutocratic individuals, or demagogues at large, who are not backed by conscientious, democratic forces, are interested in keeping their subjects in ignorance and poverty. They have done little to raise the welfare of the Arab nations that gained their freedom after World War I. Hence the general impression that none of those countries was mature enough to wield political power. Hence the Fifth Column mentality. No wonder, then, that most of the Arab leaders have been on political sale to the highest bidder, for they have no ideological or idealistic background. On those individuals who actually stabbed the Democracies in the back, or were and still are ready to do so, Britain seems to base its post-war planning in the Near East.

Former Vice-President, Henry A. Wallace, writing about an American concept of post-war world, remarked that the essence of the New Democracy is the realization that "democratic principles must eventually be made available to all nations." No one questions the eventual application of those principles to the Arabs. But Henry Wallace equally stressed that this New Democracy "believes in tolerance toward all men except those who have taken up arms to crush democracy." This statement was undoubtedly in line with the policy of the United Nations to fight this war on the basis of "unconditional surrender" of the enemy which, in turn, implied merciless dealing with the instigators of this war, and their Quislings of all kinds. Furthermore, to base the peace on solid foundations, all vestiges of appeasement must be gone, and all those who actually or potentially took up arms to crush Democracy must be brought to justice or eliminated as factors in shaping the post-war world.

In this conjuncture it *must not* be forgotten that it is the Near East that has furnished quite a number of Quislings. It is the Arabs who took up arms to fight the hard pressed Allies in the Near East, and had the Arabs not been forestalled they could have dealt the most mortal blow to Allied world strategy. The Allies might never have seen the dawn of victory, and the Near East would have surely witnessed one of the bloodiest scenes where all vestiges of democracy and civilization would have perished. The victory in North Africa, in addition to its weighty military significance, has frozen the most violent Fifth Column which did not fully explode only because of the impact of the victorious arms of the United Nations in the Mediterranean basin.

Mussolini's Empire was ripped to shreds, as Winston Churchill had predicted; Hitler's panzers were shattered in the sands of Libya, as well as in the hills of Tunisia, and so was the shattered Fascist dream of "protecting Islam," as was the Nazi "Drang nach Osten."

Cutting the Palestinian Knot

While Field Marshal Rommel's Afrika Korps was poised at al-Alamain to deliver a knockout blow to the British in the Near East, and while the Arab Quislings stood ready to play their part in stabbing the Democracies in the back, Jewish Palestine pooled its manpower and resources in an all-out effort to serve the United Nations. With fierce determination those 600,000 Jews stood ready against their merciless enemy. They had no place to retreat. In the event of a Nazi break-through at al-Alamain, the British could retreat to Kenya, Iran, Afghanistan and down to India, but for the Jews there was only one choice: to fight to the last man on the soil of Palestine. They were well aware of what it would mean to be caught between the Nazis and the Mufti-clique.

Immediately after the outbreak of the war, the Jewish Agency opened recruiting offices in Palestine, and within a short time nearly 130,000 men and women were registered for service. Since Britain as Mandatory Power is not permitted to draft Palestinians, the recruitment campaign was naturally conducted on a voluntary basis. But despite the enthusiastic response of the Palestinian Jews, the British did not make full use of the recruits. Though in extreme need of manpower to ward off Rommel's attack, as well as to guard the turbulent Arab East, the British, for political reasons, were reluctant to allow the formation of a Jewish army, and only after strong pressure had been brought by public opinion, particularly in the United States, did the

British Secretary of State for War announce, in August 1942, the decision to create "Jewish Battalions."

At first the British formed the so-called "Palestinian units" composed of both Jews and Arabs. This policy proved to be a failure, for the Arabs displayed no desire to enlist; consequently a large majority of those units were Jewish. This was the situation in the infantry companies, pioneer companies, general transport companies, light anti-aircraft batteries, electrical and mechanical section, and others. According to the London "Times" of March 4, 1943, of 29,000 Palestinians serving in the British Forces, 21,000 were Jewish. By the end of the war, almost 30,000 Jewish volunteers had joined, whereas more than half of the 9,000 Arab volunteers had deserted. This number does not include the 25,000 Jews serving in the Palestine Police, the Jewish Settlement Police, the Jewish Rural Special Police, the Palestine Volunteer Force, and other units comprising the "Home Guard." Nearly all of the 2,400 women in the Palestine Auxiliary Territorial Services were Jewish. There were many Jews serving in the R.A.F. and in the Royal Navy. This total of over 50,000 Palestinian Jews in war service is proportionately equivalent to an army of nearly 15,600,000 in the United States.

Palestinian Jewish troops were often praised by the Middle Eastern Command. The Jews fought with great zeal in Greece, Crete, Libya, Syria, Iraq, Eritrea, Abyssinia, Tunisia, and in Italy. As commandos and "suicide squads" they rendered invaluable service to the Allied cause on the various fronts, fully exploiting their familiarity with the terrain as well as their knowledge of the native tongues. They undertook most perilous assignments while the battle for the Near East was going on. There was a group of Palestinian Jews who perished while saving the oil of Mossul. While General Denz was plotting with the Nazis to invade Palestine, a Jewish suicide-squad penetrated into

the harbor of Tripoli to dynamite the oil refineries at the Syrian terminus of the Mossul pipeline. Not one survived this expedition. A Jewish unit from Hanita was the first to invade Syria. It was a Jewish unit from Palestine that broke the siege of Tobruk. On the long and bloody roads from al-Alamain to Bizerte and Tunis there are numerous graves of Jewish soldiers, whose exploits on the battlefields have not as yet been told. Just before the conclusion of the North African campaign, a Jewish general from Palestine, F. H. Kish, who had handled the extremely hard job of organizing the supplies for the Eighth Army, died in line of duty.

An equally heroic chapter was written by Palestinian Jewry on the home front. They mobilized their young industry and put it on a war footing. In 1942 there were 2,000 Jewish industrial enterprises in Palestine in which nearly 42,000 workers were employed. Army contracts for that year totalled \$50,000,000.00. Those small plants produced and supplied the fighting forces in the Middle East with most vital material while Allied shipping sustained huge losses in the U-boat infested seas.

The higher institutions of learning and research in Palestine placed all their facilities at the disposal of the war effort. The Hebrew University with the cooperation of the Hadassah Hospital, furnished precious sera to the medical corps. The Hebrew Institute of Technology at Haifa not only conducted research work for the Army but also furnished skilled engineers who built roads, fortifications, and bridges wherever needed. The Daniel Sieff Research Institute at Rehoboth manufactured vital pharmaceuticals like atabrine and plasmochin, anti-malaria drugs, which replaced the dwindling supplies of quinine.

This all-out effort of the Palestinian Jews assumes even greater significance when one realizes that it was the presence of 600,000 fighters for democracy in a hostile en-

vironment which enabled the Middle Eastern Command to turn Palestine into a key base, whence the Syria and Iraqi campaigns were organized and the Libyan campaign supplied. The war effort of the relatively small population of Jewish Palestine ought to be the most weighty factor in shaping the post-war destiny of Palestine. Nor should the heroic contribution of non-Palestinian Jews made on the far-flung battlefields of all the United Nations, both as regular soldiers and partisans, be forgotten. The super-human resistance of the martyred Jews in the Polish ghettos, plus the 6,000,000 Jews ruthlessly exterminated by Hitler's hangmen, make the Jewish blood donation the highest price paid by any nation in World War II.

The claim of the Jews to Palestine is not merely reinforced by war service. Its roots go far back in history. Since the loss of Jewish independence in 70 A.D., the Jews have never recognized the conquest of their homeland, by the Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Crusaders, or Turks. Either by constant rebellion in Palestine proper until the seventh century, when the legions of Benjamin of Tiberias still fought the occupants, or by messianic drives from their exile, or in their daily prayers throughout the centuries, the Jews constantly expressed their claims to be restored to nationhood and statehood in an independent Palestine. Despite the expulsion-and-massacre-methods employed by the conquerors against the Jews in Palestine, they have always lived in the Holy Land, although at times as a negligible minority. The Hebrew Bible is a historic document attesting to nearly 1,500 years of Jewish creativeness in the Holy Land. Because of these facts, as well as on account of the impact of the Zionist movement the world over, fifty-two nations recognized the "historic connection" of the Jews with their homeland as expressed in the Preamble of the Mandate for Palestine.

The Arabs, on the other hand, have a poor counterbalance to the Jewish historic claim. Muhammad's heavenly flight to Jerusalem on a magic steed, as nebulously related in the Koran, can hardly be regarded as a historic claim of the Arabs to Palestine. Arab rule in Palestine, following their conquest in the seventh century, lasted only three centuries. During that period, and thereafter, Palestine played no role in Arab history, whether in politics or culture. Hejaz produced the Koran, Damascus was the political center of the Omayyad Empire, Baghdad created the Abbasid culture, Cairo gained fame as the seat of the Fatimid caliphate, as well as of the al-Azhar University; whereas, Jerusalem under Arab rule was a provincial and desolate town. Except for the mosque al-Aqsa, which is a religious shrine as are hundreds of other mosques in the Moslem World, the Arabs in Palestine have no important monuments or ruins to substantiate their historic claim to the Holy Land. No wonder that the Christian World has always regarded the Jews as the "rightful heirs to Palestine."

Historic claims, weighty as they are in disputes between nations, however, are by no means the most decisive factor in settling the Jewish-Arab controversy. For the true import of the Palestine problem can be grasped, not by viewing it as an appendix to Arab inspirations, but rather by drawing it in proper perspective. First, it must be understood that there is no Arab problem in the sense in which there is a Jewish problem. The Arabs have never been in exile, have never undergone the bitter experiences of diaspora existence. No one has heard of massacred Arabs, of concentration camps for Arabs, or Arab ghettos under a Hitler. There is no overcrowding of population in any of the Arab countries, no fear of a reckless oppressor. Secondly, Arab national aspirations have been amply realized

in the last two decades. With all their grievances against British imperialism and Euporean encroachment, the Arabs won their liberty in a short time and at very low cost. Sa'udi Arabia under Ibn Sa'ud's leadership enjoys full independence, with no foreign encroachment. So does the Yaman in the South. The other principalities, or sheikhdoms, prefer to remain under British protection rather than to join one of the two rivaling masters of Arabia. The 8,000,000 Arabs who live within the confines of the Peninsula possess all the facilities for development of national life in an area one-third the size of the United States. The nomads have enough space in which to roam, and the settled inhabitants do not lack opportunities for cultivation of the soil.

Iraq is likewise independent. Its large area of 117,000 square miles, rich in cotton, grain, and oil, constitutes the most vital part of the "Fertile Crescent," and more than adequately accommodates a population of only 3,500,000. In the smaller area, having less fertility and yielding no oil, Italy supports a population of 45,000,000. In fact, were the space between the Tigris and Euphrates properly irrigated, it could easily absorb tens of millions of immigrants. Syria, too, is independent. Only 3,400,000 people live in this Arab country of 58,000 square miles. Czechoslovakia, which had only 52,244 square miles before World War II, supported a population of over 14,000,000.

Those three principal Arab countries comprise a living space, which in comparison with the average European country in the Mediterranean basin, is well nigh empty. Were we to add these to the rest of the Arab World that stretches from Egypt to Morocco, we would get an area of 3,400,000 square miles with a population of less than 48,000,000. How negligible a grain of soil does small Palestine look within this enormous space! (See map). Yet some

vociferous Arab adventurers with the backing of some reactionary Britishers, would like to see the "Anschluss" of Palestine to the Arab area, thus frustrating the only hope of the stateless, landless, and homeless Jewish nation.

Speaking about the Arab relation to Palestine, Lord Balfour said on July 14, 1920: ". . . they (the Arabs) will not grudge that small *notch* [*Italics mine*] — for it is no more geographically, whatever it may be historically — that small notch in what are now Arab territories being given to the people who for all these hundreds of years have been separated from it." This philosophy of the "small notch" unquestionably served as the guiding light to the great statesmen, who, after World War I, contemplated a solution of the Jewish question, along with justice and equality to the Arab World. While signing his treaty of friendship with Dr. Ch. Weizmann, Amir Faisal, too, seemed to comprehend the ethics and realism behind the policy of the "small notch." Those years after the First World War saw genuine and statesmanlike attempts to solve questions of great magnitude in a broad perspective.

In the two ensuing decades, however, the situation in Palestine became an extraordinarily difficult, knotty problem. This was directly traceable to British policy, for by their failure to carry out the provisions of the Mandate, the British rendered a disservice to Jews and Arabs alike. As a sequel to that policy, the Jews have remained a minority and as such have become an object of hatred on the part of the Arabs. Had the Jews been given the opportunity to become a majority in Palestine, the friction between them and the Arab countries would have ceased. For one thing, the Arabs would have been convinced that an international obligation endorsed by 52 nations meant something. Secondly, faced with a Jewish State as an accomplished fact, the Arabs would have sought an alliance with their "Sem-

itic cousins," for it would not have been wise politics to combat a modern Power that could easily ally itself to the Arab-hating Turks.

We are witnessing today a large-scale re-shaping of the whole world. Decisive and far-reaching adjustments have to be made in order to secure peace for generations to come. The Jewish minorities of Europe, defenseless and shattered as they are, are waiting to be transferred to their original homeland, where they may join their own folk and be restored to statehood and nationhood. Those uprooted Jews, even under the most democratic regimes in Europe, have little chance for rehabilitation, as the masters of the respective countries consider it a primary duty to care for the indigenous population. Secondly, those hapless Jews who in the Diaspora have undergone the bitter experience of constant persecutions and massacres, and in particular the slaughter under Nazi-domination, no longer consider Europe a tolerable habitat. It is a matter of justice and political foresight to put an end, once and for all, to the age-old tragedy of a people whose unique and unenviable position in the world stems from the fact that they have been a minority everywhere, but a majority nowhere.

This position of the Jews has bred anti-Semitism and provided useful dynamite for tyrants, oppressors, and trouble-makers of all times. The exodus of the unwanted Jewish minorities from Europe will not only rid its trouble spots of that dynamite but, by the creation of a Jewish majority in one place of this globe, will also make Palestine a safety-valve against anti-Semitism.

Is there enough room in Palestine to absorb millions of Jews? Western Palestine holds a population of about 1,800,000, of whom over 600,000 are Jews. Sicily, also a Mediterranean territory, and of the same size as Palestine, supports a population of about 4,500,000. This number should by no means be regarded as the highest for Pales-

tine, because modern technology and full use of human energy are capable of vastly expanding its absorptive capacity.* Were the United Nations to restore the original boundaries of the Jewish National Home, the area of Palestine astride the Jordan, covering nearly 45,000 square miles, could absorb about 20,000,000 people, using the Sicilian yardstick. Of this territory, Transjordan, three times as large as Western Palestine, has a small population of only 300,000, whose number has remained stationary during the last two decades as a result of the arbitrary British exclusion of Jewish immigrants from this Eastern part of Palestine. The fertile soil of Transjordan has not even been tapped by the nomads or half-nomads of this area, which under Amir Abdullah's rule has been merely a desert outpost.

However, the British had different plans for Transjordan and its ruler. Confronted with an impending withdrawal of British troops from Egypt after World War II, the British Government hastily declared the "independence" of Transjordan, securing a military base for the Empire. On May 25, 1946, the 64 year old Abdullah proclaimed himself King over Transjordan which is legally a part of the Palestine mandated territory, and, as such, should, according to article 77 of the United Nations Charter, be transferred to the authority of the Trusteeship Council.

Thus far the British have opposed the expansion of the Jewish National Home. One need not have access to the secret archives of the British Colonial Office to discover the roots of that opposition. First, it has suited British purposes to abide by the age-old political formula of "divide and rule." Secondly, the British imperialists of the old Colonial School found it comfortable to base their rule in

*According to W. C. Lowdermilk, 4,000,000 more people could be settled in Palestine, should his Jordan Valley Authority Plan see realization.

the Near and Middle East on oligarchic groups, subsidized by them in one way or another, groups who thrive on the misery and ignorance of their fellow-natives. The Jews, however, who have built up modern Palestine for no imperialistic purposes but because of their need for a home, are Westernized, intelligent, and highly skilled. As such, they hardly fit into the British design, and represent a menace to the reactionary practices of the British Colonial Office. Whether those practices have served British interests is subject to doubt, for a Jewish Palestine with millions of sincerely democratic citizens not only would have rendered invaluable service in such times of crisis as we experienced during the war, but would also have established the first truly democratic bastion in the Near East for the general benefit of the United Nations. It is Jewish Palestine that has taught the Arabs extensive cultivation of the soil; it is the Jews of Palestine who enabled the Arabs to improve their working conditions and raise their standard of living; it is Jewish doctors and Jewish hospitals that have cut the infant mortality of the Arabs from 205 per 1,000 in 1929, to 121 per 1,000 in 1939. It is peaceful Jewish colonization that has made possible a remarkable increase of the Arab population in Palestine, from 600,000 to 1,000,000 in a short period of two decades. This phenomenon is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that the Arab population in the adjacent independent Arab states has shown slight increase during the same period.

In relation to the Arabs, the Jews realize that being destined to live in the Near East, they will have to come to terms with their neighbors. Some kind of alliance between Jews and Arabs is a matter of realistic policy. Such an alliance, however, cannot be based on the principle of a Pan-Arab Federation whereby the Jews in Palestine will be subjected, as the Lebanese Christians have been, to the

Levantine rule of intolerant Moslems, or live in a narrow ghetto on the Mediterranean coast. It must be based on mutual good-will and equal partnership.

Actually, if one looks into the future and speaks in terms of long-range policy, it is clear that the common foe of Arabs and Jews is, in the final analysis, British imperialism. As yet the Arab leaders have failed to realize that the Jews in Palestine are also fighting for the progress and well-being of the whole Arab World. By introducing the blessings of modern technology into the Holy Land, the Jews have begun the epoch-making process of industrializing the Arab World, a process which the British are trying desperately to hold back. It is clear that, whether Tory or Socialist, British imperial economy thrives on colonial exploitation. Without the cotton from Egypt and the oil of the Middle East, British plants may have to shut down and workers in Manchester and London may have to go idle.

The "industrial revolution" inaugurated by the Jews in Palestine is looked upon by imperialist Britain as aiming at the very arteries of her economy. The Churchills and Attlees alike fear the industrialization of the Middle East and dread the rise of truly democratic forces in that undeveloped region. That is why they support the feudal lords of the Arab League, those reactionary notables whose existence and influence are seriously threatened by any true Arab awakening. Unfortunately, the Arabs find themselves between the anvil of their own reactionary system and the British imperial hammer. Thus far, the Arab World has not produced progressive and far-sighted leaders who can see eye to eye with the revolutionary efforts of the Zionist enterprise in Palestine.

A mutual partnership of Jewish-Arab democratic forces against an outworn and decaying imperialism would bring peace to the troubled Middle East. Only such a partnership

can lead to genuine understanding between Arabs and Jews and bring about a political alliance between the two quarrelling "cousins."

A Jewish State in Palestine as a full-fledged member of a Near Eastern Alliance seems to be the condition *sine qua non* to any such move. The Arabs in Palestine need not fear Jewish domination, for constituting a majority in so many countries, they stand to lose nothing by remaining a minority in a Jewish state. This minority, given full autonomy, will certainly enjoy civic equality with their Jewish neighbors, a status which the Palestinian Jews will demand for the Jewish minorities in other countries of the Near Eastern Alliance. If a better world is to emerge, the principle of "*natio nationi lupus*" must no longer govern the relations between peoples. However, if the Arabs in Palestine, for one reason or another, should prefer to live under Arab rule, they are always free to emigrate to spacious Iraq which could absorb millions of newcomers. As to the Holy Places of the Moslems and Christians in Palestine, they could easily be granted extra-territorial rights under Moslem and Christian rule, respectively. Such an arrangement would, no doubt, eliminate the religious acerbity which often aggravates political issues in the East. The Arabs not only will exercise full and undisturbed control over their *Haram ash-Sharif** and other Moslem shrines but in addition, will gain a faithful ally in the Jews, who will help make desolate Arab East as fertile and productive as their own National Home.

Cutting the Palestinian knot in this way is not merely a matter of doing justice to a people who have lost a third of their pre-war strength in the slaughterhouses of Europe** Nor is it merely a question of honoring inter-

* Moslem sanctuary in Jerusalem.

**According to most reliable sources, out of 17,000,000 Jews in the world, more than 6,000,000 were wiped out by the Nazis.

national obligations. In these times of momentous decisions it will undoubtedly be an act dictated by far-range political wisdom, inasmuch as it would eliminate a trouble-spot in the Middle East, and thus contribute to world security. Moreover, a Jewish-democratic Palestine, whether wholly independent or under an international trusteeship, is the best bulwark against the eventual rise of Fascism in the Holy Land and in the neighboring countries. For pro-Fascist cliques in Palestine and in the Middle East still control many a government, either quite openly or under various cloaks. These anti-democratic elements have not been eliminated or checked by the British. In case of a Fascist come-back in Europe—and no one doubts that Nazidom suppressed and driven underground will do its utmost to foster all prospective trouble-spots so as to keep the post-war world in a state of constant turmoil—the Middle East will surely be a promising hunting ground for a “renascent” Hitlerism.

The solution of the Palestine problem here advocated is also in perfect harmony with the sentiments expressed by the people of this great democracy. On June 27, 1944, the Republican National Convention adopted the following platform with regard to Palestine: “In order to give refuge to millions of distressed Jewish men, women, and children driven from their homes by tyranny, we call for the opening of Palestine to their unrestricted immigration and land ownership, so that in accordance with the full intent and purpose of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the resolution of a Republican Congress in 1922, Palestine may be reconstituted as a free and democratic commonwealth.” Also the Democratic National Convention on July 24, 1944, expressed a clear-cut policy on the Palestine problem in the following resolution: “We favor the opening of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization, and such a policy as to result in the estab-

lishment there of a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth.”

Zionist hopes rose high as the British Labor Party, in May, 1945, adopted a resolution declaring: “There is surely neither hope nor meaning in a ‘Jewish National Home’ unless we are prepared to let Jews, if they wish, enter this tiny land in such numbers as to become a majority. There was a strong case for this before the war. There is an irresistible case now, after the unspeakable atrocities of the cold and calculated German Nazi plan to kill all Jews in Europe — The Arabs have many wide territories of their own; they must not claim to exclude the Jews from this area of Palestine, less than the size of Wales.”

This outspoken resolution, coupled with the British Labor Party’s denunciation of the anti-Zionist White Paper of 1939, was remembered by the Jewish people as the Labor Party came to power in August 1945. The Jews all over the world hopefully waited for the new government to abolish the White Paper of 1939 and to open the gates of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish survivors in Europe, still massed in concentration camps, impatiently awaited the day of their liberation and their immediate transfer to Palestine. However, the Labor Government made no effort to keep the promises its party had made before it took over the reins of the Empire.

Months passed and the Jewish community in Palestine grew restless. A powerful underground came into being. Determined to force the gates of Palestine open to their homeless brothers, this underground declared open warfare on the British Government. Buildings, bridges, and military installations were attacked and blown up. Many lives, Jewish and British, were lost.

In order to alleviate the hopeless situation of the surviving Jews of Europe, President Truman in August, 1945

called upon the British Government to admit 100,000 Jews to Palestine immediately. His plea fell on deaf ears. British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin allowed a negligible quota of 1,500 monthly, suggesting a joint Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry which would make a thorough study of the Palestine problem and submit a plan for its solution. While many voices were heard to the effect that it was too late for inquiries — for the situation of the displaced Jews grew worse with each passing day — the Anglo-American Committee came into being and began its work on January 7, 1946. Under the joint chairmanship of the Hon. Joseph C. Hutcheson and Sir John E. Singleton, the Committee heard the testimony of various organizations and individuals in the United States and England, on the European continent, in Palestine, and in some Arab countries. In April, 1946 a unanimous report was submitted to the American and British Governments. This report called for the immediate admission of 100,000 European Jews to Palestine; it recommended the abolition of restrictions on the sale of land, and as its long-range policy it advanced the formula that Palestine shall become “neither a Jewish nor an Arab State,” and that the government be continued as at present under mandate pending the execution of a trusteeship agreement under the United Nations, with a view to achieving a “form of ultimate self-government.”

The British government did not seem very eager to carry out the recommendations of the Committee, particularly those which favored the Jews. Despite President Truman's insistence on the immediate implementation of the short-range recommendations, Mr. Attlee remained adamant to American pressure as well as to the desperate plight of the European Jews. He stalled for time, trying to appease the Arabs. And when thousands of Jewish “uncertified” immigrants in small boats and dingy freighters swarmed to the shores of Palestine, the British Navy and Air Force were

mobilized to intercept those refugees and divert them to the island of Cyprus. Jewish resistance in Palestine took alarming proportions and reached its climax in the blowing up of the British Military Headquarters in Jerusalem in July, 1946.

In the meantime the British Government advanced a new proposal known as the "federalization" of Palestine. It called for the creation of a Lilliputian Jewish province of about 1,500 square miles and of an Arab province of about 5,000 square miles. According to this proposal an enclave of Jerusalem would remain under British rule, and so would the Negeb-district, or southern Palestine, with an area of 3,780 square miles. Obviously, this was another scheme aimed at perpetuating British domination of the Holy Land with special emphasis on the Negeb which is being built up as a British military base. With the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt, this base will undoubtedly assume ever greater importance in the defense strategy of the Suez Canal.

The Jews were enraged at this scheme which spelled complete ghettoizing of the Jewish Community in Palestine and virtually barring the hundreds of thousands of homeless Jews from reaching their Promised Land. The Arabs, too, rejected the plan, and there seemed to be no way out of the Palestine impasse which the British themselves created by their fatal policy.

At the time of this writing the British are pouring more and more troops into the Holy Land with the apparent intent of combatting the Jewish underground. It seems that the Socialists of Downing Street have not learned the Nazi lesson that even the most powerful army cannot suppress an underground which has the support and backing of an entire community.

Quo vadis, Britannia?

Pan-Arabia, Myth and Reality

Pan-Arab nationalism, or all-Arab unity under one supreme leadership, is rather an ambiguous term. Insofar as the Arab World is concerned, it is still in a mythical stage. Like any other myth, Pan-Arabism has given rise to a great deal of nebulous speculations and uncertain adventures. For those Arabs who cherish a dream of an Empire from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean, it is merely a sentiment, although some theorists are trying to transform this sentiment into a political program. To the policy makers of the British Colonial Office, Pan-Arabia is occasionally an expression of what is known as "benevolent imperialism," and sometimes — oddly enough — a bugbear aimed at intimidating the Jewish National Home in Palestine. Recently the British have tried to build up Pan-Arabia as a bulwark against Russian penetration into the Arab World.

It was German orientalists who prior to World War I "discovered" the racial background of the Turks, planting in their minds the idea of Pan-Turanism, which prompted the Pan-Turan leaders of Turkey to side with Germany against Russia and Great Britain. This idea, being partly responsible for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, had a rather short life and relapsed into the realm of myth whence it sprang originally.

Ameen Rihani and George Antonius, both *Christian* Syrians and Westerners in outlook, tried to lay the foundations of a Pan-Arab ideology. Both realized that Pan-Arabia is but a distant dream. For the near future, however, they

suggested a federation of Arab States, or rather two federations, one comprising the northern countries, or the so-called "green zone," the other, the Arab Peninsula. When they descended from the heights of myth to the ground of reality, these Pan-Arab exponents included Arabia, Syria, Palestine, and Iraq in their scheme, excluding the peripheries of the Arab World.

In other words, only the sector in which the Arabs have seen their national aspirations fulfilled, is considered as fertile ground for Pan-Arab experiments. But even in this area of 1,210,600 square miles, with a population of only 15,625,800, the obstacles are numerous and sometimes seem insurmountable. Small wonder that Ameen Rihani had to agree that "an Arab federation is a form of national growth which is chiefly from within, spontaneous — not proposed." And it is this spontaneous and vital element that was found wanting during the period of Arab awakening.

Pan-Arabism's lack of *genuine* Arab roots is at once obvious and characteristic. The three prerequisites of any political movement are: ideology, organization, and leadership. In Pan-Arabism all three are lacking. There is no work or written document in Arabic which may be regarded as a summation of thinking along Pan-Arab lines. Nor has any Arab author laid down the common principles around which *all* the Arab speaking countries, states, principalities, and tribes could unite. Furthermore, there is no Pan-Arab central organization with branches all over the Arab World, nor is there a militarily strong Arab Power in the Near East which could really be the bearer of such an idea.

It is ludicrous to assume that some Arab cliques, or "family clubs," that often speak in behalf of Pan-Arabism, represent the masses, or certain democratic forces that stand behind them. There was the Istiqlal after World War I, an

organization with some semblance of Pan-Arabism, but its leader Auni Bey Abdul Hadi, could give irrefutable evidence of the complete bankruptcy of the Istiqlal as an all-Arab movement.

As to lack of Pan-Arab leadership, we need not provide ample documentation. There remains the undeniable fact that the "Pan-Arab movement" has not produced a leader of a Gandhi or Chiang Kai Shek stature. The very fact that politicians like Nahas Pasha, Nuri Said, Amir Abdullah, or paid agents of the Nazis, like the ex-Mufti and Rashid al Gailani, assume the cloak of Pan-Arab prophets, is in itself a clear sign that Pan-Arabia is merely a propaganda kite flown by demagogues.

The only leader among the Arabs worthy of that name in the best Arab traditions of acquiring mastery by the might of one's blood-shedding hand, is Ibn Sa'ud. But Ibn Sa'ud is too realistic, or, rather, too Arab to pose as a Pan-Arab leader. Lack of geographical cohesion between the numerous countries stretching from Aden to Tetuan makes it a physical impossibility to create a Pan-Arabia. Racial and ethnic heterogeneity, as well as extreme regionalism, which in some sectors narrows down to tribal patriotism, also blocks the way for a Pan-Arab union. It has been pointed out in a preceding chapter that it is the Arabic language and Islam that bind the Arabs together. But, are these and some other factors sufficient to weld the Arab-speaking peoples into a common political entity? Judging from Arab history, and from the political development of the Arab countries in modern times since the rise of nationalism, the answer seems to be a negative one. All students of Arab history will have to admit that the Arab has never been an empire-building people. Extreme individualism and deep-rooted particularism, which are two characteristic features of the Arab mentality, are responsible for the inability of the Arabs to hold the Omayyad and

Abbasid Empires, both built by foreigners, the Syrians and Persians, respectively. The Omayyad Empire lasted only about ninety years, counting from the advent of Muawiyah in 661 until 750. The Abbasid Empire was rather Persian than Arab, its caliphs being puppets at the mercy of the non-Arab Moslems. The unity of the Arab tribes, achieved by the sword of the prophet Muhammad, disintegrated upon his death, and has not since been pieced together. Arab history is the story of ceaseless upheavals of independent provinces against a central authority striving vainly to hold remote and diverse countries.

In the course of the Arab awakening, one thing became clear: Arab nationalism itself militates against Pan-Arabism. It was primarily this regional, particularistic nationalism that shaped the destiny of the Arab countries after World War I. Reviewing the political revolts in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt, one must arrive at the conclusion that each country struggled independently to gain its freedom. Each of them succeeded in gaining independence not as a result of a unified Arab front under one leadership, but rather through the efforts of local leaders who kept hammering on local patriotism. As early as 1924 the Pan-Arab dream injected into King Hussain's brains by the late T. E. Lawrence, foundered on the rock of reality. Hussain was too mediocre a leader to unite the Arabs; his rival, Ibn Sa'ud, British opposition, and his unpopularity in the Arab and Moslem World made him a tragic figure. T. E. Lawrence's influence did not help much to make the Pan-Arab mirage a reality. Pan-Arabism proved a myth. Even Lawrence himself who fought for Pan-Arabia, admitted in 1928 the mirage-like character of Pan-Arabism. In one of his letters to his friend Pearson, he wrote: "The Arab speaking peoples are as diverse as the English speaking, and equally distinct. From Morocco to Mesopotamia is far, spiritually, as far as from San Francisco to Aberdeen. Further, there is a

world between the Bedouin of Azrak and the peasant of Amman, though the journey is only 50 miles. Only a criminal would wish to make them all alike. When people talk of Arab confederations or empires, they talk fantastically. It will be generations, I expect, unless the vital tempo of the East is much accelerated, before any two Arabic States join voluntarily. The nearest approach to an Arab empire at present is Ibn Sa'ud's. It is a figment built on sand. Nothing *static* will rise in the desert, which has seen hundreds of such tyrannies at his, all cemented (less liberally perhaps) with blood."

This was the opinion of a great friend of the Arabs. Recent history has proved that the Arab States after achieving their freedom were unable to bring about the simplest form of unity, namely, mutual friendship based on treaties. One need only recall the war between Ibn Sa'ud and the Yaman, the averted war between Ibn Sa'ud and Abdullah and Iraq, and the constant antagonism between Arabia and Egypt. True, treaties of friendship were later concluded among several Arab-speaking peoples, but this was done rather under the pressure of the British than as a result of conscientious, political maturity on the part of the quarreling Arab leaders.

The utmost proof of the bankruptcy of the Pan-Arabian idea is the political development of Syria. When Amir Faisal entered Damascus with his desert horsemen, he surely dreamt of this glorious city as the center of a modern caliphate; for it is Damascus more than any other city that could revive the dream of an Arab Empire. Reality, however, shattered that dream irrevocably. Not only did Syria not succeed in reviving Pan-Arab unity, but she did not even have the power to unite the centrifugal provinces of Syria proper. "Great Syria" became reduced to a small Lilliputian state with no access to the sea after Ataturk carved out the *sanjak* of Alexandretta, and Lebanon became

an independent republic. Alexandretta, Lebanon, and the ever-rebelling Jabal Druze and Aljezira are the tombs of the Pan-Arab graveyard.

The touchy question of the caliphate, which has evoked so much controversy and bloodshed, may be considered another stumbling block in the way of Arab unity. The Arabs cannot unite effectively unless a caliph, both a temporal and spiritual head, leads them. But the attempt of the late Hussain to proclaim himself caliph in 1924 caused so much uproar and indignation among the opposing camps of the Arabs and the Moslems at large that the very idea of a modern caliph had to be abandoned altogether. In this connection it must also be borne in mind that it is primarily the Christian World that will view with apprehension any attempt to revive the caliphate which by its very character must be intolerant and breathe the jihad-spirit against the "infidel" Christians and Jews.

Among the other internal stumbling-blocks, there are many socio-economic, socio-religious, and socio-cultural factors which cannot be overlooked in the final analysis of the Pan-Arab problem. Some of these will be mentioned briefly. The semi-feudal system which is still prevalent in all Arab countries and which breeds plutocratic oligarchy, is hostile to any political or economic Pan-idea; the eternal struggle between the desert and the sown, namely the diverse economic systems of the Bedouin and the settler, is almost insoluble. The appalling extent of illiteracy and backwardness both in cultural and technological fields is a factor that is anything but encouraging for a coherent and real Pan-Arabia.

As a myth, however, Pan-Arabism strikes the imagination and serves as a political lever for ambitious adventurers. The Syrian nationalists, having failed to unite their own motherland, occasionally harp on Arab universalism. The tottering regime of Nuri Pasha in Iraq with the unpopular

Hashimites, tried more than once to seize the reins of the Pan-Arab vehicle. So also did the ambitious and pro-Axis King Farouk, by virtue of being the ruler of the most civilized among the Arab-speaking countries. Even Amir Abdullah thinks that Allah has endowed him with the power to rule over Syria, Iraq, Palestine, and eventually Hejaz, to which he has a legal claim as the son of Hussain. On the other hand, all these rulers are "infidels" in the eyes of the aging Ibn Sa'ud who, if given sufficient strength and the blessing of the British, would teach them the lesson of unity through the medium of his sword as he taught his fellow-Arabs ever since he mowed down his opponents in Riad.

Aside from these inner aspects of Pan-Arabism, there is an outer factor, and a very potent one, which will prove the most decisive in eventual Pan-Arab schemes. That is the interests of the Western Powers who actually rule over the Arab World. It is safe to assume that none of those Powers would like to see a real and strong Arab Federation come into being. Great Britain, whose former Prime Minister declared that he had no intention of giving up the British Empire, does not contemplate seriously the creation of an independent Federation of Arab States, for such a federation would imperil her lifeline and shake British hegemony in the Near East. What the British Colonial Office would probably like to see is some substitute or semblance of such a federation, like a Union of Syria, Transjordan, Palestine, and Iraq, if possible, under some puppet like Amir Abdullah, who has so loyally served British interests in the Near East.

The French policy in Syria and North Africa points unmistakably toward hostility against any Pan-Arab design. The French have ruled their Arab provinces under a strict colonial regime, suppressing mercilessly all outbreaks of national sentiments. The North African colonies or pro-

tectorates have far to go before they achieve the degree of self-government that the Arab countries have enjoyed under the mandatory system.

Turkey, that traditional foe of the Arabs, will certainly oppose any attempt to create a strong union of Arab States. And Russia, whose interests in the Mediterranean are being pressed with so much vigor, will not look favorably upon the consolidation of the Arab countries which played into Hitler's hands at the most crucial stage of the war. Nor will the Russians forget that it was the Arab mufti whose legion fought in Russia under the swastika. This, however, does not mean that Russia will not flirt with an Arab League to play it off against the British.

The future of the Arab East depends primarily on the policies of the United Nations. The Mediterranean and the Suez Canal should be internationalized to provide a free thoroughfare to all nations, in accordance with Article 7 of the Atlantic Charter. The heterogeneous and non-compact Arab East will certainly turn into another Balkan if a Pan-idea based upon a racial, religious, or supernatural principle is allowed to mature into an explosive movement. Such a Pan-Arabism will undoubtedly be combated by all the United Nations. However, it may be assumed that the Arab countries that have won their independence will be encouraged to develop their democratic institutions to the welfare of all their citizens. The progress of democracy in the backward Arab countries, whose political philosophy is based upon an autocratic doctrine, is a matter of slow education and re-education; it is a job for many generations to come. Of course, treaties of alliance like those signed in 1936 and 1937 between Saudi Arabia, the Yaman, Iraq, and Egypt, provide for a measure of cooperation among the Near Eastern countries. The much heralded Pan-Arab Congress, which convened at Cairo in August 1943, failed to bring tangible results. The only matter the representa-

tives of several Arab countries could agree upon was a resolution to work out a plan of economic and cultural cooperation. But even regarding such a plan, Ibn Sa'ud had different views from those of Nuri Pasha of Iraq or Nahas Pasha of Egypt.

The Pan-Arab spark flickered again in 1944. This time Egypt took the lead. After preliminary meetings of representatives from the neighboring Arab States, with a great deal of spurring by the British, Arab leaders convened at Cairo in October 1944, and drafted what was later known as the constitution of the Arab League. On March 22, 1945, in Cairo, representatives of Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Trans-Jordan—the Yaman did not participate—announced their agreement on the formation of a League of Arab States with the aim of promoting “cooperation among member states, particularly in matters of culture, trade, and communications, and to settle questions of passports and nationality among its members.” The constitution of this League, comprising twenty-one articles, provides for consultation in case of aggression against a member and forbids the use of force to settle disputes.

The failure to stress the inner political character of the Arab League is very significant. It is a loose and non-too-binding organization with no political program. Members are free to withdraw at any time and may conclude treaties with foreign powers, the only provision being that they are obligated “to submit a copy” to the League’s Council, which is to meet twice yearly in Cairo. The Constitution is not final, being subject to ratification by the respective governments.

How far the League will go in forging the Arab States into a Pan-Arab structure is anyone’s guess. Its very character bespeaks the strengthening of the sovereignty of the small states rather than their relinquishing their rights in

favor of a common political leadership. Egyptian pre-dominance in the League, with its permanent seat in Cairo, can hardly be to the liking of the "purer" Arabs of the Peninsula or of Iraq.

Yet, despite the inner weakness of the Arab League and its military insignificance, its weight in external politics is not to be discounted. On the contrary, with the outspoken British policy of checking Soviet penetration into the Middle East, the Arab Federation is gaining more and more influence in world affairs. Arab leaders are cleverly playing off Britain's fear against Russia, for they know well the strategic value of their countries. Foreign Secretary Bevin's statement that Russia comes "right across the throat of the British Commonwealth" was clearly understood by the Arab rulers. They have become ever more vociferous in their propaganda. As the *London Times* of September 26, 1945, put it: ". . . the Arab League has been more occupied with traditional eloquence than with the elaboration of constructive programs . . . just now the main, if not the only, unifying force in the League is an ingrained and traditional xenophobia, directed, according to circumstance against the French the British or the Jews."

And yet the British are the staunchest promoters of this undemocratic League. Professor Harold J. Laski wrote some time ago: "Now the truth is that the states of the Arab League are, in fact, the decayed remnants of a half-dead system in which a small number of wealthy Arabs exploit several million of their fellow-men, who mostly lead miserable lives, are badly housed, undernourished, and largely illiterate. It would be morally impossible for a labor government to protect these social relations even if it could be."

It is obvious, however, that morality does not mean much in the policies of the British Labor Government, which

seems to advocate socialism at home and imperialism abroad. Holding the Arab countries in the firm grip of the sterling block, the British are backing feudal lords, thus opposing social reforms which they advocate at home. Of course, this attitude of the British will hardly eliminate the "specter of Bolshevism" in the Arab countries. Quite the contrary, by supporting an anti-democratic system, they will only precipitate social unrest and play into the hands of the Soviet agents in the Near East.

In the meantime, the Arab League is clamoring for more influence in the international arena. It marked its initial success at the first session of the United Nations as Egypt became a member of the Security Council, while Lebanon was elected to the Economic and Social Council, and a Syrian Arab got the chairmanship of the Preparatory Commission.

The spokesman and secretary of the League is Abdur-Rahman al Azzam whose behavior during Rommel's assault on Egypt was outspokenly anti-Allied and pro-Fascist. Yet he commands the respect of many democratic nations, and his voice goes far. Abdur Rahman is the idol of the *Moslem Brotherhood*, a rabble-rousing movement organized by one Hassan Albena in 1941. This Brotherhood, which claims a membership of 100,000 in the Arab countries, is patterned after the Hitler Jugend. It is anti-communist and anti-Western, anti-Jewish and anti-Christian.

Andre Servier, who made a thorough study of the psychology of the Arabs, remarked: "Powerless to conceive a higher interest, to cherish a lofty ideal, they (the Arabs) have always lived a life of indiscipline. Subject to chronic anarchy, the Arab has never been able to subordinate his individual egoism to the pursuit of any great collective task, to the realization of any national ambition." Can the Pan-Arabists refute this diagnosis? Time alone will tell. As things stand at present, the Arabs have been afforded the most favorable opportunities to build up their inde-

pendent states in the Near and Middle East. They have not undergone the horrors of this war. They are free to prove their constructive abilities. But any toying with an explosive political idea in this vital area at the crossroads of three continents, may seriously jeopardize the peace of a new and free world. It was Professor H. A. R. Gibb, a pro-Arab historian who termed Pan-Arabism "an ignorant, intolerant, explosive force; it substitutes wishing for thinking, fiercely resents not only Christian domination but anything that savors of Christian practice and ideas, dreams of driving European and Jew into the ocean and restoring the glorious empire of the caliphate."

The Arab World and Democracy

Islam is not merely a religion to the Arab-speaking peoples. For nearly thirteen centuries it has been to them a world outlook, a way of life, a socio-cultural system. This outlook is essentially based on two fundamentals: *Allah Akbar* — Allah is Omnipotent — and his word, the Koran, is immutable. The Moslem brotherhood is the most perfect creation of Allah while the rest of the world must be combatted until the last of the “infidels” have been wiped off the earth. Such a concept of brotherhood is the reverse of the basic principle of Democracy, which preaches equality of all people regardless of religion, nationality, or race.

The social system of Islam, which has remained stagnant since the Seventh Century, is based on absolute masculine superiority and polygamy. The sacred word of Allah sanctions that superiority in unmistakable language: “Men are in charge of women, because Allah made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them.”

Since days immemorial the Arabs have considered the birth of a daughter a curse. Female infanticide, which in the time of Muhammad was usually carried out by burying alive the unfortunate babies, was commonplace with the Arabs. The value of a woman was measured by her abilities to labor for her master, to satisfy his desires, and to bear

male children. Polygamy was unlimited, and so was the institution of concubinage. Although Muhammad forbade infanticide and restricted polygamy to four, the situation of the Arab woman did not improve. On the contrary, it became even worse as a result of Moslem legislation and habits which brought about the complete seclusion of the woman, thus sanctioning her inferior status. By imposing upon women the wearing of the veil "to cast down their looks" and "guard their private parts" — as the Koran puts it — they were barred from public life. The harem institution made this seclusion even more complete. Divorce legislation, which gave the man the absolute right to dispose of his wives at will, contributed a great deal to the cruel enslavement of the woman. The old Arab practice of marrying off minor girls of twelve years of age is not only psychologically detrimental, but partly responsible for the high infant mortality, which in some Arab countries takes the horrible toll of 300 per 1,000.

The progress of a nation can be accurately measured by the place women enjoy in social life. No wonder that the New Turkey, while marching on the road of Westernization, discarded the Koranic law, replacing it by the Swiss Code. By separating Church and State, the builders of the New Turkey became free to abolish all vestiges of social backwardness fortified by the Koran. Polygamy, the veil, harems, and minor marriages were forbidden. Instead, full equality for women was introduced. Of all the Moslem countries, Turkey is the only state where women suffrage is not only a matter of legislation, but also a working reality.

The Arab speaking countries have been rather shocked by the "Godless" practices of the Turks. After all, the Koran is a peculiarly Arabic heritage and could hardly be repudiated by its originators as it has been by Ataturk's men. With regard to Islam, the Turks have taken the most radical course: they have simply eliminated it from their

political life. While other Moslems of Persian or Hindu descent have tried to "reform" Islam, the Turks would have none of these palliatives.

Babism and Bahatism of Persian origin are reformed Islam, for the progenitors of these two sects reduced Islam to a set of moral principles to which both liberal Christianity and Reform Judaism could subscribe easily. A similar path was followed by the outstanding Moslem Hindu, Sir Sayyid Ahmad, known as the founder of the Aligarh University. In his interpretation of the Koran he gave priority to science.

The Arab-speaking peoples, however, would not accept any of these reforms. While Arabia of the Wahhabis turned the clock back by strict adherence to the inviolability of the Koran, the rest of the Arab-speaking countries chose a conservative course. Some attempts have been made in Egypt to establish a sort of "liberalism," but on the whole those attempts have foundered on the rock of al-Azhar which is still a fortress of Moslem conservatism. This theological university, founded in 930 A.D., is, in fact, a medieval institution. In essence scholastic, it has preserved memorizing as the method of studies. Flogging is not unusual. As before, the rabbis of Surah and Pumpaditha, the students of al-Azhar sit in circles on mats, "at the feet" of their lecturers. They receive daily portions of bread, as has been the custom for centuries. The scene has not changed, as Islam has not changed. What the learned sheikhs offer is interpretation of interpretations of verses of the Koran.

Thanks to Sheikh Muhammad Abdou, who died in 1905, modern science began penetrating into this medieval school at Cairo. But this penetration was rather shallow and failed to dethrone the Koran. For one thing, Abdou's view was diametrically opposite to that of Sir Ahmad Sayyid in that he acknowledged the superiority of the Koran over science. He did not oppose adoption of modern science and tech-

nical devices as long as they were compatible with the Koran and the Sunna. The present Sheikh of al-Azhar, al-Maraghi, is as conservative as Abdou. And although the preparatory classes of al-Azhar have secular subjects like geography, chemistry, mathematics, and physics, plus electric lights and modern desks, the spirit of orthodox Islam is prevalent throughout.

There is no room for liberalism in al-Azhar. Its guardians of the Koran moved quickly in 1925 to excommunicate Sheikh Abdul Raziq whose teachings threatened to undermine the very structure of Islam. In his book "Islam and the Principles of Government," Abdul Raziq expressed some views similar to those of Sir Sayyid Ahmad, and even seemed to justify the Turkish revolution. Armed with profound knowledge of Moslem traditions and keen observation, he attacked the institution of the caliphate at its roots. The caliphate, in his opinion, has no true justification either in the Koran or in tradition. To him Muhammad was purely a religious leader; as Allah's messenger, he was not sent to govern people as a worldly leader. His messengership implied the gospel of a universal religion. The political-governmental aspect of Islam was by no means essential, for it is inconceivable that a worldly government rule the whole world. Thus he separates the two aspects of Islam, the religious from the national. In his opinion, they represent two parallel lines and should not come into conflict. Therefore, he urged the separation of religion from state. As far as science is concerned, there should, likewise, be no conflict with religion, for religion and science are two different domains. He also denounced the caliphate as "a source of evil and corruption, exploited by ambitious politicians."

The two outstanding champions of liberalism in Egypt are Mahmud al Aqqad and Dr. Taha Hussain, both secular in outlook and modern in thought. They see the future of Egypt in complete Westernization, stressing Egyptianism

as against Arabism. In orthodox and conservative Arab circles their writings are anathema. Several years ago their books were publicly burnt in the streets of Damascus.

The upper class in Egypt and a part of the intelligentsia, especially the students of the secular Fuad University, tend to acquire some liberal tendencies, but the Government can hardly pass legislation which will not meet the approval of the sheikhs of al-Azhar. A number of women in high society have lifted the veil, making a revolutionary step toward modernization, but the bulk of the population, being deeply religious, considers the lifting of the veil an unpardonable sin. It is significant that the Queen of Egypt would not appear without a veil so as not to offend the religious sentiments of the people. The only "radical" legislation which the sheikhs of al-Azhar have permitted is that of fixing the minimum marriage age at sixteen for girls and eighteen for boys. Polygamy, divorce, the veil, being sacred institutions, sanctioned by the Koran, remain untouched. And they will remain so, for King Farouk who, prior to his accession to the throne of Egypt was very liberal in his conduct, suddenly became a pious Moslem as al-Maraghi sold him the idea of pretention to the caliphate.

Even the degree of liberalism witnessed in Egypt is inconceivable in Syria or in Iraq. In the face of Christian influence from the Lebanon, the Moslems of Syria want to see no change in their social structure as far as women are concerned. The same applies to Iraq; there the Shi'ite majority will combat any legislation undermining the authority of the Koran. Not only regard for the sanctity of Moslem law but considerations of sheer personal convenience inspire Arab devotion to the idea of the subjection of their women. The average father of daughters resents legislation aimed at the restriction of early marriages, for the younger the bride, the more "dowry" he gets for her from the groom. The polygamist finds it very convenient to smoke a

“narghila” and lie idly in his tent or shack, or palace, while his women are laboring hard on equal footing with animals. Even the enlightened Arabs advocate polygamy and the marriage of minors, on the ground that they check prostitution. Actually, however, prostitution flourishes in the Arab-speaking countries. Red light districts in Alexandria, Jaffa, or Algiers are an integral feature of the Arab East.

Why, then, should Arabs accept Western standards? They have lived for centuries, quite happily, as orthodox and conservative, and want no change. Of course, the modern elements in Alexandria, Damascus, or Baghdad are trying to alter the social structure of their community, but they must proceed very cautiously in the face of strong opposition. Schools for girls, that new feature in Moslem communities, are bound to pave the way for the emancipation of the Arab woman, but the way does not seem easy, as it was in Turkey.

Penetration of Western ideas into the Arab world will proceed at a snail's pace. The Koran and the *jihad* spirit, which is defined as “a doctrine of permanent war against the unbelievers,” still exert a predominating influence upon the majority of Arabs. This makes cooperation with the West extremely difficult. The Arab Peninsula, as we know, is a hostile and forbidden territory for non-Moslems. To preach democratic principles of religious equality or government by the people is pure hallucination. In Ibn Sa'ud's kingdom, there are no Jews or Christians; they were exterminated long ago in the course of the Islamization of the Peninsula. But there is not even equality of the different Moslem creeds in Ibn Sa'ud's kingdom, since none is on equal footing with puritanic Wahhabism. Government of the people in a country where a rod of iron wielded by an absolute monarch, and blessed by Allah Akbar, who represents the source of power, is but a farce. Hostility to

the non-Moslem is not less bitter in the Yaman. The handful of Jews living there have experienced the most horrible persecution. Shut behind walls and herded in filthy huts and ruins, they are living testimony to the most wretched existence of *dhimmis*. Even such a nationalist Arab as Ameen Rihani was shocked by the horrors of the Yaman. In one of his Arabic books (*The Kings of Arabia*) he says about his fellow Arab in the Yaman: "Oh, my Zaidi brother! Of what use is your prayer while your heart is filled with hatred? You hate the world outside the Yaman, you abhor Christian swines and the cursed Jews."

In countries like Syria and Iraq, as well as in Egypt, where nationalism is supplanting the religious idea, the road toward democracy seems long and thorny. For nationalism in these states is still of a purely negative character, always fighting against something. Constructive nationalism has not yet taken shape there. Constructive nationalism means devotion to one's country without encroachment upon his neighbor's possessions. It also means developing the natural resources of one's country for the benefit of all its inhabitants, equal rights for all its citizens irrespective of creed or color, sound and universal education, improvement of sanitary conditions, social security, and many other constructive factors which aim to set one's own country in order, in short, pursuit of democratic ideals as expressed in the formula of the "Four Freedoms."

Are the Arab-speaking countries willing to subscribe to those ideals for which World War II was fought at tremendous sacrifices of blood and wealth? Their record does not provide a positive answer. They did not seem to display any interest in helping the war effort of the United Nations; nor were they eager to pool their manpower and resources in order to make their contribution toward victory. To them this war meant very little, for democracy has no meaning to them. There is no such word in the Arab

language. The fact that rebellious Iraq jumped on the United Nations' bandwagon by declaring war on the Axis in 1943, had no significance, for not a single Iraqi soldier actually fought in this great war against tyranny. That step of Iraq was merely dictated by a desire to avoid retribution at some later time.

Furthermore, Iraq under the leadership of pro-British Nuri Pasha, was most certainly eager to secure for herself a seat at some future peace conference. Nuri Pasha must have reasoned that his country being a belligerent, even though only in name, might not only blot out the stain of the anti-Allied revolt of 1941, but also make a start on the road to democracy.

As the pendulum of victory kept swinging toward the Democracies, the spectacular might of the Allies seemed to convince the Arabs that Allah had definitely forsaken Hitler. And yet the Arab States did not follow Iraq's lead until February, 1945. They kept sitting on the fence, while all the freedom-loving peoples were paying heavily in blood, sweat, and tears. Then came the Crimean Conference at Yalta. The "Big Three," particularly the British partner, helped the Arabs to make up their minds. When the Red Army was poised at the gates of Berlin, and American and British troops stood on the Rhine, the rulers of the Arab States finally decided that they were witnessing the last stage of this war. Hurriedly they jumped on the victorious bandwagon of the Allies.

Egypt declared war on the Axis, though she had to pay for this step with the life of her Premier, Ali Maher, who was assassinated by a pro-Axis fanatic. Syria and Lebanon followed with similar declarations. Even Ibn Sa'ud, that staunchest of Moslem isolationists and profound hater of the West, considered it worthwhile sending a delegation to the San Francisco Conference. Oil made him rich, and

lured him to the international arena. He, too, declared war on Germany in the spring of 1945.

Now as the United Nations are resolved to build a superstructure to secure peace for suffering humanity, one wonders how well the Arab World will fit into the family of nations and harness its power for building a better, more humane, and more civilized world. Were these questions put to the awakening Arabs, they would probably shrug their shoulders and say, *Allah Ya'aref* — only Allah knows!

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INDEX

- Abbas, -al, 18
 Abbas II, (Abbas Hilmi), 129, 131
 Abbas, Fenhrat, 149
 Abbas Pasha, 125
 Abbasids, 8, 18, 19, 45, 185, 200
 Abd-el-Jalil, 147
 Abdou, Muhammad, 127, 130, 211
 Abdul Aziz, at-Thaalibi, 60
 Abdul Aziz, Fahmi, Bey, 132
 Abdul Hadi, Auni Bey, 106, 114,
 117, 177, 199
 Abdul Halek Torres, 147
 Abdul Hamud, Sultan, 39, 42, 43,
 44, 46, 49, 80
 Abdul-Ilah, 101
 Abdul Kadr, 42
 Abdul Krim, Muhammad, 146
 Abdul Latif as-Salah, 115, 117
 Abdullah, Amir, 56, 59, 68, 69, 72,
 81, 92, 93, 114, 189, 199, 201, 203
 Abdullah ibn Rashid, 28
 Abdul Raziq, 212
 Abdur-Rahman, (Ibn Sa'ud's
 father), 65
 Aberdeen, 200
 Abu Bakr (caliph), 26
 Abu Dhabi, 64
 Abukir, 124
 Abu Timman, Ja'far, 93
 Abwehr, 173, 174
 Abyssinia (see Ethiopia), 182
 Adana, 56, 57
Ad-Difa', 114
 Aden, 36, 53, 55, 63, 72, 76, 151,
 154, 199
 Adhrub, 22
 Adli, Pasha, 133
 Afghani, -al, Jamel-ad-Din, 42, 43,
 127
 Arghanistan, 47, 48, 181
 Africa, 6, 11, 37, 170, 176
Afrika Korps, 181
 Agadir, 40
Abd al Iraqi, 91, 108
 Ahmed Beg Agayeff, 49
 Ajlan, 66
 Ajman (tribe), 72
 Akkadian, 9
Al-Abram, 155
 Albanians, 50, 124
 Albena, Hassan, 207
 Alamain, -al, ix, 181, 183
 Alami, al, Musa, 177
 Alawiya (order), 142
 Aleppo, 28, 57, 58, 83, 87, 170
 Alexandretta, 57, 85, 88; 201, 202
 Alexandria, xiv, 16, 36, 125, 128,
 132, 136, 137, 150, 155, 158, 214
 Algeria, 3, 23, 33, 36, 39, 40, 42,
 141, 143, 144, 145, 149
 Algerian Moslem Party, 148
 Algerians People Party, 149
 Algiers, 34, 35, 214
 Al-Hassa, 27
 Ali (caliph), 18, 26, 44, 64
 Aligarh University, 211
 Ali ibn Abbas, 20
 Ali ibn Hussain, 71
 Allah, 12-16, 22, 25, 27, 20, 33, 35,
 59, 61, 65, 71, 76, 158, 166, 172,
 177, 203, 209, 214, 216, 217
 Allal-el-Fassi, 117
 Allenby, General, 60, 61, 109, 132,
 133, 135
 Allied Supreme Council, 104
 Allies, the, xiv, 84, 109, 180, 216
al-Liwa, 113, 116
 Almohades, 141
 Almoravides, 141
 Alouites, (Sect), 7, 8, 78, 85
 American Standard Oil Company,
 176
 Amman, 69, 71, 201
 Ammariya (order), 142

- Amr-ibn al As, 16
 Amurru, 9
 Anaiza, 66
 Anatolia, 39, 49
 Ankara, 70, 88, 162
 Andrews, L. Y., 121
 Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, 195
 Anti-Semitism, 188
Anschluss, 187
 Antonius, George, 57, 96, 197
 Aqaba, 164
 Aqqad,-al,-Mahmud, 212
 Aqsa,-al, mosque, 113, 115, 185
 Arab Bureau (Berlin), 163, 165, 174
 Arab Bureau (Geneva), 142, 155
 Arab Empire, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 81, 201
 Arab Freedom Movement, 173
 Arab Higher Committee, 117, 120
 Arabia, x, 3-5, 7-9, 11, 17, 24, 27, 28, 40, 41, 53, 58, 63, 64, 72-78, 176, 198, 201
 Arabia Deserta, 4, 24
 Arabia Felix, 4
 Arabian Mining Syndicate, 176
 Arabian Nights, xi, 21
 Arabian Peninsula, 4, 7, 26, 63, 198, 214
 Arabian Sea, 3
 Arabian Standard Oil Company (California), 75
 Arabi Pasha, Ahmed, 126-129
 Arab League, 191, 204-207
 Arab Legion, 148, 174
 Arabs, xiv, 3-7, 9-12, 14-21, 25, 26, 28, 30, 44, 46, 50, 52, 53, 57, 58, 60, 61, 64, 65, 67, 78, 79, 81, 88, 89, 96, 105-108, 111-114, 118, 120, 121, 124, 140-143, 148, 150, 151, 156-158, 166, 174, 177, 178, 181, 184-187, 190, 192, 194, 199, 201, 203, 204, 206, 207, 214, 216, 217
 Arab World, xii, xiv, xv, 3, 7, 8, 29, 31, 33, 36, 40, 61, 155, 174, 186, 187, 191, 197, 198, 203, 217
 Aramaic, 4, 10, 11
 Arameans, 78
 Aristotle, 20
 Armenians, 7, 50
 Armenoid, 4, 5
 Aryan paragraph, 23
 Aryans, 160
 Asia, 11, 19, 49, 148
 Asia Minor, 32, 51
 Asir, 63, 71-73
 Asuri, Najib, 80
 Assyrians, 23, 78, 96, 98
 A'taba (tribe), 68, 72
 Ataturk (Kemal Pasha), 21, 51, 200
 Athens, 35, 162, 178
 Atlantic Charter, xii, 204
 Atlantic Ocean, 197
 Atomic Age, xii
 Atrash,-al, Pasha, 86
 Attlee, Clement, 191
 Averroes, 20
 Avicenna, 20
 Axis, 118, 171, 174, 176, 177, 178, 203, 216
 Ayana, 26, 27
 Azhar,-al, 47, 48, 127, 130, 132, 133, 136, 139, 185, 211-213
 Azmi, al, Nahib Bey, 157
 Azraq, 61, 201
 Azzam,-al, Abdur-Rahman, 175, 207
 Bab-al-Mandab, 36
 Babel, 6, 78
 Babism, 211
 Babylon, 9
 Babylonian empire, 10
 Badr, 12
 Baghazkoy, 10
 Baghdad, 8, 18, 23, 28, 40, 55, 57, 91-95, 97, 101, 162, 164, 170, 171, 173, 185, 214

- Baghdad Railway, 40, 160
 Bahaism, 210
 Bahrain Islands, 27, 53, 54, 64, 76, 176
 Bahri, al, Yunis, 166
 Bairut, 79-81, 87, 89
 Bajid, 72
 Balbo, 151
 Balfour Declaration, 102-106, 108, 113, 122, 193
 Balfour, Lord, 187
 Balkans, 32, 160, 162
 Balkan War, 39
 Bani Sakhar, 60
 Bank Misr, 139
 Baqir Sidqi, 98, 99, 100
 Barbary State, 33
 Bari, 154, 157, 165, 178
 Barudi, Fakhri Bey, 86
 Basra, 40, 54, 57, 91, 93
 Bedouin, 4, 6, 12, 14, 24, 30, 40, 74, 201
 Belgrade, 162
 Bell, Gertrude, 175
 Benghasi, 158
 Beni Uriaghel (tribe), 146
 Benjamin of Tiberias, 184
 Berberic nation, 7
 Berbers, 6, 16, 141, 146
 Berlin, 40, 164-166, 171, 173, 175, 216
 Bethlehem, 120
 Bevin, Ernest, 195, 206
 Beybers, Sultan, 45
 Bible, the, 10, 20, 80, 184
 Biscay, Bay of, 14
 Bismarck, 39
 Bizerte, 183
 Bligni eres, de Monsieur, 126
 Bludan, 156
 Blue Shirts, 156
 Blum, Leon, 87, 144, 146
 Bolshevism, 207
 Bombay, 47
 British, the, xii, xiii, 36-40, 46, 53-61, 63, 68, 73, 84, 91-99, 104, 106, 108, 110, 114-118, 124, 126, 130, 131, 136, 150, 155, 157, 158, 163, 165, 169-172, 176, 181, 189, 206
 British Colonial Office, 110, 120, 179, 189, 190, 197, 203
 British Empire, xi, xiii, 91, 103, 121, 150, 151, 203
 British Labor Party, 194
 Brockelmann, C, 160
 Budapest, 162
 Buraida, 66
 Bustani, Butrus, 79
 Butrus, Pasha, 130
 Buwayhids (Persian dynasty), 18, 45
 Byzantine culture, 14
 Byzantines, 15, 184
 Caesar, 14, 150
 Cairo, xiii, 24, 45, 47, 48, 93, 124, 125, 127, 128, 132, 133, 135-137, 158, 159, 172, 175, 204-206, 211
Caisse de la dette publique, 126
 Caliphate, 16, 18, 45, 47, 62, 70, 80, 208
 Canaanite migration, 9
 Cape of Good Hope, 33
 Capitulations, 133, 136, 137
 Carbilellet, Captain, 86
 Carmathian movement, 26
 Casablanca, 38
 Catroux, Georges, General, 89
 Caucasus, xii, 42, 168, 173
 Ceylon, 93, 128
 Chamberlain, Neville, Sir, 118, 121, 151, 169
 Charles V, 33
 Cheetham, Sir, 132
 Chekir, Ghanem, 104
 Chiang Kai Shek, 199
 China, 14
 Christianity, 10, 11, 15, 141

- Christians, 13, 22, 23, 38, 43, 57,
 78, 79, 82, 84, 154, 190, 192, 202,
 214
 Churchill, Winston, 92, 93, 103,
 106, 112, 122, 180
 Cilicia, 83
 Circassians, 124, 125
 Compagnie d' Afrique, 36
 Congress (U.S.), ix
 Constantinople, 16, 28-30, 32, 35,
 37, 39, 40, 43, 46, 66, 131
 Copts, 7, 154
 Cox, Percy, Sir, 69, 92
 Crete, 35, 170, 177, 182
 Crimean Conference, 216
 Cromer, Lord (Sir Evelyn Bar-
 ing), 129, 131
 Crusaders, 33, 184
 Ctesiphon, 14
 Czechoslovakia, 186
 Curzon, Lord, ix
 Cyprus, 70, 170, 196
 Cyrenaica, 39, 152

 Dadoni, Udo, 154
 Damascus, 8, 17, 18, 24, 28, 38, 40,
 57, 58, 60, 61, 80-83, 85-87, 90-
 92, 156, 164, 170, 185, 201, 213,
 214
 Daniel Sieff Research Institute,
 183
Dar-al-Islam (Islamic World),
 17, 18, 27, 42, 43 (see also *Mos-
 lem World*)
 Dardanelles, xiii, 39
 Darfur, 59
 Darius, 14
 Dariya, 28
 Dawish, 72
 DeGaulle, General, 149
 Democratic National Convention,
 193
 Denmark, 37
 Denshawi, 130
 Denz, General, 174, 182
Destourists, 145
Destours, 145
*Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Islam-
 kunde*, 160
Deutsche Kolonialdienst, 163
Deutsche Orientnerem, 160
 Diaspora, 188
 Dill, General, 118
 Disraeli, 36
 Dodecanese Islands, 39
 Downing Street, 196
 D.N.B. (Nazi News Agency),
 164
Drang Nach Osten, 39, 40, 159,
 161, 164, 180
 Druzes, 7, 8, 78, 86
 Duce, il, 151, 152, 156, 157

 Eden, 101
 Egypt, xi, xii, 3, 4, 7, 9, 15-17, 21,
 28, 30, 31, 34-37, 39, 41, 47, 49,
 56, 59, 60, 71, 79, 116, 124-140,
 150, 151, 153-158, 161, 162, 163,
 168, 175, 178, 186, 188, 191, 200,
 203-207, 211, 213, 215, 216
 Egyptian Labor Corps, 131
 Egyptians, 6, 7, 20, 30, 34, 78, 124,
 129-132, 153, 157
 Ehrenfels, von, Omar Rudolf, 163
 Eichmann, Carl, 172
 Eilaender, Roland, 175
 Elite Guard, 116
 Emin Effendi Youssef, 139
 England (see Great Britain), 37,
 38, 195
 Entente Cordiale, 130
 Enver Pasha, 39
 Eritrea, 182
 Ethiopia, 116, 136, 150, 151, 154,
 155
 Ethiopic language, 4
 Euhprates, 9, 92, 96, 186
 Europe, 11, 19, 32, 39, 50, 80, 121,
 159, 162, 188, 192-194
 Europeans, 7, 128
 Ewert, von, 173

- Fahmi, Sa'ud, 170, 171
 Faisal ibn Sa'ud, 77
 Faisal, ibn Hussain, King, 59, 61,
 69, 81, 82, 92-94, 97, 100, 105,
 106, 161, 187, 201
Falastin, 114
 Far East, x
 Farouk, King, xiii, 137, 172, 175,
 203, 213
 Fascism, 115, 193
 Fascists, 115, 116-118, 123, 136,
 150-154, 156, 158, 193
 Fashoda, 37
 Fatat,-al, 52, 81, 108, 114
 Federal Petroleum Reserve Cor-
 poration, x
 Ferrar, M. L., 49
 Fertile Crescent, 9, 10, 17, 21, 186
 Fez, 40, 142, 146, 147
Fifth Column, 15, 69, 118, 146,
 155, 166, 168, 169, 171, 174-179
 Finns, 49
 Fisher, Lord, ix
 Four Freedoms, xiv, 215
 France, xi, 37, 38, 82, 84, 89, 103,
 143, 144, 148, 157, 168, 177
 Frankfurter, Felix, 105
 French, the, 23, 33-40, 50, 84, 86,
 88, 93, 124, 126, 130, 144, 149,
 164, 170, 172, 203, 206
 French Union, 149
 Fuad, Ahmed, Sultan (King), 131,
 135, 137, 139, 155
 Fuad University, 213
 Fula tribes, 29

 Gailani,-al, Rashid Ali, 23, 166,
 170, 171, 173, 174, 199
 Galen, 20
 Galilee, 119, 121
 Gandhi, 199
 Gentlemen's Agreement, 151
 Geopolitics, 159, 161
 Germans, 39, 46, 50, 148, 159-162,
 164
 Germany, 39, 40, 53, 99, 159-162,
 172, 173, 197, 217
 Gestapo, 148, 166
 Ghazi, King, 98, 100, 165
 Ghussain, Ya'qub, 116, 117
 Gibb, H. A. R., 208
 Gibraltar, 16
 Gilgamesh (epic), 10
 Goebbels, 175
 Goldziher, Ignaz, 160
 Goltz, von, Colonel, 39
 Graziani, 152, 153, 157, 159, 170
 Great Britain, ix, x, xi, 53, 56-58,
 94, 122, 131, 133, 137, 150, 151,
 171, 197, 203
 Greece, 4, 158, 182
 Greeks, 50, 51, 78, 139
 Green Shirts, the, 156
 Gregorians, 78
 Grobba, Fritz, Dr., 165
 Grozny (oilfields), 173

 Habbaniyah, 170
 Habib Bourghiba, 145, 146
 Hadassah Hospital, 183
 Hadhramaut, 36, 64, 76, 176
 Hafiz, Abru, 45
 Hafsid dynasty, 45
Haganah, 117
 Hail, 69
 Haj Amin al Hussaini (see also
Mufti), 48, 111-114, 116, 117,
 157, 166, 169-173, 176
 Haifa, 110, 117, 118
 Haile Selassie, 154
 Hakem (Fatimid caliph), 85
 Hama, 57, 58, 83
 Hammurabi, 10
 Hanita, 183
 Harar, 154
 Harb, 69, 72
 Hashimite family, 58, 61, 67, 69,
 71, 97, 105, 203
 Haushofer, Karl, 161
 Hebraism, 22

- Hebrew, 4, 78
 Hebrew Institute of Technology, 183
 Hebrew University, 183
 Hebrews, 10, 13
 Hejaz, 3, 8, 27, 28, 49, 55, 56, 60, 63, 64, 69-71, 74, 77, 105, 185
 Hejaz Railway, 40, 48
 Hellenistic Civilization, 20
 Henting, von, 165, 175
 Heraclius, 14
 Herzl, Theodor, Dr., 109
 Hikmat Sulaiman, 98, 99
 Hindu, 20, 21, 44, 49, 211
 Hippocrates, 20
 Hithlain, 72
 Hitler, Adolph, xiv, 69, 148, 158, 159, 161, 165-173, 175, 177, 180, 184, 185, 204, 207, 216
 Hitlerism, 193
 Hittite, 10, 78
Hizb-al-Hurr, 94
Hizb-al-Nadhbba, 93
Hizb al Watani, 93
 Holy Land, 103, 106, 108, 109, 115, 118, 177, 184, 185, 193, 196 (see Palestine)
 Holy Places, 192
 Homs, 57, 58, 83, 86
 House of Commons, 106, 122
 Hunain ibn Ishaq (Joannitius), 20
 Hussain ibn Ali, al-Idrisi, 72
 Hussain Kamel, Sultan, 131
 Hussaini, al Jamal, 113, 177
 Hussaini family, 114, 177
 Hussain, Sharif and King, 55-63, 67-70, 81, 104, 107, 200, 202, 203
 Hutcheson, Joseph C., 195
 Hyksos, 9

 Ibadī (Moslem sect), 8, 64
 Iberian Peninsula, 32
 Ibn Abdul Wahhab, Muhammad, 26, 27
 Ibn Khaldun, 20

 Ibn Nusair, Musa, 16
 Ibn Rashid, 28, 54, 55, 63, 66
 Ibn Rushd (Averroes), 20
 Ibn Sa'ud, Abdul Aziz, xi, xiii, 48, 54, 55, 62, 63, 65-77, 157, 176, 186, 199-201, 205, 214, 216
 Ibn Sa'ud the Great, 27, 30, 71, 76
 Ibn Taimiya, 26
 Ibn Tumart, 142
 Ibrahim Pasha, 28, 35, 79
Ikhwan, 69, 70-72, 76
Il Giornale d'Oriente, 155
 India, 14, 17, 20, 25, 29, 33, 36, 44-46, 49, 54, 71, 91, 181
 Indian Ocean, 56
 Indian Political Service, 54
 Iran, ix, xiii, 48, 168, 171, 173, 181
 Iraq, vii, 3, 6-8, 15, 17, 23, 27, 30, 41, 46-48, 57-58, 60, 68, 69, 76, 81, 84, 91-102, 105, 106, 108, 118, 143, 156, 157, 163-165, 168, 170, 174, 182, 186, 192, 198, 200-206, 213, 215, 216
 Ishmaelites, 13
 Iskandarun (see Alexandretta), 175
 Islam, 3, 8, 10-13, 17-19, 22, 24-27, 29, 30, 42-44, 46-50, 53, 57, 58-60, 64, 71, 73, 78, 127, 141-143, 147, 151, 154, 158-160, 169-180, 199, 209, 211, 212
 Islamic World (see Moslem World)
 Islamischer Kulturbund, 163
 Ismail Hajji Muhammad, 29
 Ismail (Khedive), 36, 126
 Ismaelites, 78
 Istanbul University, 50
Istiqlal, 114, 198
 Italian Armistice Commission, 157
 Italians, 39, 72, 139, 153, 156, 157, 159, 164
 Italy, xi, 39, 152, 171, 175, 176, 182, 186
 Ittehedists, 135, 139
 Izz-ad-din-, Sheikh, 116

- Izzat Darwaza**, 157
Jabal-ad-Durus, 85-87, 202
Jabal Shammur, 28
Jacobites, 78
Ja'far Pasha, 98
Jaffa, 110, 114, 120, 214
Japan, 168
Jarba, 22
Jawwad, Muhammad Ali, 99
Jazirah, al, 90
Jebel Nefusa, 142
Jemal Pasha, Ahmed, 52, 81
Jenin, 116
Jerusalem, 40, 48, 110, 113, 115, 120, 148, 166, 169, 185, 196
Jewish Agency, 181
Jewish Battalions, 182
Jewish National Home, 103, 106, 108-110, 112, 113, 120, 122, 189, 194, 197
Jewish State, 103, 104, 119, 187, 192
Jews, 5, 7, 11, 16, 20, 22-24, 48, 50, 96, 103, 104, 106, 107, 109, 112-114, 116, 118, 120, 121, 123, 141, 165, 169, 170, 172, 177, 181, 183, 187, 188, 190-192, 194, 195, 202, 206, 214, 215
Jezreel, 119
Jihad (Holy War), 13, 52, 53, 55, 117, 148, 171, 214
Joannitius, 20
Jordan, Hans, Dr., 165
Jordan (river), 10, 189
Jordan Valley Authority, 189
Joseph era, 125
Joshua, 22
Judaism, 11, 211
Judea, 118
Ka'aba (Black stone of Mecca), 13, 71
Kairowan, 142
Kamel, Mustapha, 129, 130
Kasim Pasha, Musa, 110, 113
Kaukaji, Fauzi, 118, 166, 169, 170
Kawakabi, Abdur-Rahman, 80
Kemal Pasha, Mustapha, 50 (see *Attaturk*)
Kendi, al, 20
Kenya, 181
Kerbela, 27, 30, 92
Khabiru (Hebrews), 10
Khalidi, al, Hussain, Dr., 115, 117
Khalid, ibn al-Walid, 13, 16
Khan Maisalun, 82
Khanaqin, 101
Khwariz, 26, 64, 142
Khurma, 68
Khutba, 44
Khwarizmi, al, 20
Kirkuk, 84, 101
Kish, F. H., General, 183
Kitchener, Lord, 37, 56, 130, 131
Koch, Paula, 175
Konia, 40
Koran, the, 4, 8, 11, 13, 15, 19-22, 25-27, 30, 44, 45, 50, 59, 64, 73, 75, 76, 127, 142, 160, 165, 177, 185, 209-214
Kremer, Von, 160
Kuchuk, Kainarji, 45
Kultur, 160
Kurds, 7, 88, 92, 96
Kuwait, 3, 40, 53, 64, 69, 76, 176
Lahay, 64
La Ligue de la Patrie Arabe, 81
Lampson, Miles, Sir, 136
La Péril Egyptien, 129
Laski, Harold J., 206
Latakia, 85, 87
Latin alphabet, 50
La Voix des Humbles, 143
La Voix Indigène, 143
Lausanne, 88
Lawrence, T. E., 60, 70, 93, 161, 165, 200
League of Nations, 88, 91, 95, 110, 122, 154

- Lebannon, xiii, 23, 38, 57, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 201, 202, 205, 213, 216
- Lend-Lease, ix
- Lesseps, 126
- Levantine, xiii, 165, 191
- Libya, 39, 40, 151-154, 157-159, 168, 180, 182
- Lihyani (language), 4
- Lindermann, Hans, 161
- Lloyd George, David, 103
- London, 121, 131-133, 136, 191
- Lowdermilk, W. C., 189
- Lyazid, Muhammad, 147
- Madfa'i, Jamil, 99, 100
- Maghreb, 7, 17, 141, 142, 143, 146, 148, 149 (see North Africa)
- Magna Charta of Egypt, 127
- Magyars, 49
- Mahdi, the, 42, 44
- Maher, Ali, 136, 175, 216
- Mahmud, Mehemed Pasha, 135
- Mahmud Pasha, 127
- Mahmud Sulman, 170, 171
- Malta, 79, 132
- Mamluks, 19, 45, 124
- Ma'mun, -al, 20
- Manchester, 191
- Maraghi, -al, 175, 212, 213
- Mardam Bey, Jamil, 104
- Mare Nostrum*, 150
- Marimid dynasty, 45
- Maroccan Action*, 146, 147
- Maronites, 78
- Marrakesh, 11, 146
- Marsa Matruh, 59
- Martel, de Comte, 86, 87
- Marwede, Major, 174
- Masquat, 53, 176
- Masri-el, Aziz Ali, General, 92, 175
- Mazzolini, 155, 158, 175
- Mecca, 12, 13, 22, 24, 27, 28, 40, 46, 48, 55, 56, 60, 67, 70, 71, 104, 142, 171
- Medina, 8, 11, 17, 18, 22, 23, 26-28, 40, 60, 142
- Mediterranean, the, xi, xii, xiii, 3, 36, 56, 57, 85, 121, 138, 145, 150, 151, 155, 180, 186, 188, 204
- Mehemed Ali, 28, 30, 34, 35, 64, 124, 125, 129, 137, 140
- Mein Kampf*, 161
- Mersin, 56, 57
- Mesopotamia, 84, 91, 92, 101, 160, 200
- Messali Haj, 144, 149
- Middle East, ix, xi, xii, xiv, xvi, 102, 161-163, 183, 190, 191, 193, 206, 208
- Middle Eastern Command, 182, 184
- Milner, Lord, 133
- Mina, 47
- Minaaens, 4
- Mirdam, Jamil, 87
- Moltke, von, 39
- Mongols, 19
- Montreux, 137
- Moorish National Party, the, 147
- Morgenlaendische Gesellschaft*, 160
- Morocco, 3, 6, 7, 18, 23, 37-40, 45, 141, 146, 147, 186, 200
- Moscow, 70
- Moses, 22
- Moslem Brotherhood, 207
- Moslem World, 30, 33-35, 38, 41-43, 50, 52, 61, 113, 185, 200
- Moslems, 3, 17, 18, 22, 24, 28-31, 33, 34, 40, 42, 44, 46-49, 52, 53, 57, 59, 70, 71, 78, 80, 96, 141, 143, 151-155, 159, 170, 171, 182, 191, 192, 200, 202, 211, 213
- Mosul, 40, 83, 84, 91, 92, 96, 99, 165
- Mua'llaqat (Arab poetry), 20
- Muawiyah (caliph), 17, 18, 26, 200
- Mueller, August, 160
- Mudros Armistice. 61

- Mufti, The (see Haj Amin-al Hussaini), 111, 113, 120, 121, 148, 166, 168, 169-173, 177, 181
 Mughals, 45
 Muhammad, 3, 8, 9, 12-14, 16-18, 21, 22, 24-27, 44, 171, 185, 200, 209, 210
 Muhammad ibn Abdul Aziz, ibn Sa'ud, 77
 Muhammad Sa'id, 131
 Muhammad Sadr, 93
 Muhammad V. Sultan, 46
 Munich, 21, 151, 169
 Murrah (tribes), 65
 Mussolini, 136, 146, 150-152, 154, 156-158, 169, 177, 180
 Musta'sim (caliph), 45
 Mutair (tribe), 72
 Mutanna, al-, 164
 Mutawakkil, al, 20, 23, 45
 M'zab, 142

 MacDonald, Ramsay, 113, 133
 MacDonald White Paper, 113 (see White Paper)
 McMahan, Henry, Sir, 56-58, 81, 84, 91, 106-108

 Nabataens, 10
 Nablus, 114, 115, 117
Nadi al-Arabi, 164
 Nahas Pasha Mustapha, 135-138, 175, 199, 205
 Najd, 4, 7, 26-28, 54, 63, 65, 67, 77
 Najf, 46, 92
 Najran, 11
 Napoleon, 30, 34, 35
 Nashashibi family, 114, 121
 Nashashibi, Ragheb Bey, 110, 115, 117, 120
 Nasiri, Mekkiel, 147
 Navarino, 35
 Nazareth, 120, 121
 Nazidom, 171, 193
 Nazis, 96, 116, 117, 156, 158, 159, 161-166, 171, 181, 182, 192, 199
 Nazism, 49, 115
 Near East, xii, xiv, 40, 83, 102, 105, 116, 139, 155, 156, 159, 161-163, 166, 168-171, 173, 175, 176, 178-182, 190, 198, 203, 207, 208
 Near Eastern Alliance, 192
 Negeb (Southern Palestine), 60, 196
 Negroid, 5
 Nehavendi-, al, 20
 Nekrashi Pasha, 138
 Neo-Platonism, 20
New York Times, 172
 Nile, 124, 125, 130, 132, 133, 140, 150, 157, 158, 163
Nili, 109
 Nilotic Stock, 6, 124, 127
 Noeldecke, Th., 160
 Nogues, General, 147
 North Africa, x, 7, 16, 25, 33, 38, 82, 140, 144, 148, 154, 180, 203 (see Maghreb)
North African Star, the, 144, 149
 Novicoff, Nicolai, xiii
 Nuri as- Sa'id Pasha, 97, 98, 100-102, 106, 199, 202, 205, 216
 Nusairi (sect), 85
 Nuwas, dhu, King, 11
 Nuremberg, 163
 Nuremberg Congress, 115
 Nuremberg Laws, 23

 Occident, 32, 40
 Ojair, 69
 Oman, 8, 27, 64
 Omar (2nd caliph), 26, 45
 Omar II, 23
 Omayyads, 8, 17, 18, 24, 25, 44, 45, 82, 160, 185, 199, 200
 Oppenheim, Max Von, 161, 165
 Orient, 32, 40
 Othman (3rd caliph), 26
 Othman Dan Fodio, 29

- Ottoman Empire, 24, 30-32, 34, 35, 42, 53, 81, 91, 152
 Palestine, xi, xiii, 3, 4, 7, 9, 17, 23, 33, 38, 48, 49, 56, 57, 60, 90, 101, 103-123, 154, 157, 162-164, 169-171, 176, 177, 181-197, 203
 Palestine Royal Commission, 107, 118, 119
 Palmyra, 170
 Pan-Arabia, 89, 124, 197-208
 Pan-Arab Congress, 204
 Pan-Arab Federation, 190 (see Arab League)
 Pan-Arabism, 161, 197-200, 202, 204
 Pan-Islam, 42, 43, 44, 46-49, 53, 161
 Panther (gunboat), 40
 Pan-Turanism, 49, 197
 Papen, Franz, von, 163
 Paris, 81, 86, 87, 144, 146, 172
 Partition-Plan, 121
 Passfield White Paper, 113
 Peel, Lord, 118, 169
 Perin (island), 36
 Permanent Mandates Commission, 95, 122, 123
 Persia, 17, 47 (see Iran)
 Persian Gulf, 3, 41, 53-56, 64, 69, 170, 197
 Persians, 7, 14, 15, 20, 21, 78, 96, 200
 Petra, 10
 Petroleum Imperial Policy Committee, 91
 Pharaoh, 125, 140
 Philby, John, St., 68, 163
 Philistines, 78
 Phoenicians, 7, 10, 78, 141
 Plato, 20
 Pope, the, 44
 Poitiers, 16
 Ponsot, Monsieur, 86
 Port Sa'id, 137
 Portuguese, 33
 Promised Land, 10, 196
 Protestants, 78
 Prussia, 159
 Prussianism, 50
 Pumpaditha, 211
 Punjab, 16, 29
 Pyramids, 125, 158
 Pyrenees, 11, 16
 Qathan, 4
 Qathaniya,-al, 81, 92
 Qatabanis, 4
 Qatar, 64, 176
Qibla,-al, 104
 Qoraysh (Muhammad's family), 17, 44
 Quai d'Orsay, 86
 Quazzani,-el, Ibrahim, 147
 Quislings, xiv, 168, 179-181
 R. A. F. (Royal Air Force), 94, 171, 182, 195
 Rabat, 146, 147
 Rahmaniya (order), 142
Ramadhan (Month), 47
 Ramleh, 114
 Rappard, Wm., Professor, 123
 Raziq, David, 171
 Red Army, the, 216
 Red Crescent, 48
 Red Cross, 48
 Red Line Agreement, x
 Red Sea, 56
 Rehoboth, 165
 Reich, the, 165
 Reichsmark, 162
 Republican Congress, 193
 Republican National Convention, 193
 Rhine, the, 216
 Riad, 28, 66, 203
 Riffi, 146
 Rifki Pasha, Othman, 127
 Rihani, Amcen, 197, 198, 215
 Rock, Alfred, 114, 117
 Roderick, King, 16

- Roehm, 72
 Roman Empire, 151, 157
 Romans, 14, 78, 141, 184
 Rome, 151, 154, 158
 Rommel, General, ix, xii, xiv, 158, 168, 175, 181, 207
 Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, xi
 Rosen, Rudolf, 175
 Royal Commission (see Palestine Commission)
 Royal Navy, 182, 195
 Rushdi, Pasha, 131, 132, 133
 Russia (see also Soviet Union), ix, xii, xiii, 49, 50, 84, 171, 172, 197, 204, 206
 Russians, the, ix, xiii, 39, 204
 Rustum Haidar, 106

 Saadabad, 48
 Sabaaens, 4
 Sa'id al Iman, Dr., 165, 174
 Sa'id' Hamil, 173
 Salah ad-Din, as-Sabbagh, 170, 171
 Salim, Sultan, 45
 Salisbury, Lord, 129
 Salonika Congress, 46
 Samuel, Herbert, Sir, 111, 112
 San Francisco, 200
 San Francisco Conference, 216
 San Remo, 82
 Sanussi,-as, Sayyed Ahmed, 59
 Sasanid Empire, 14, 15
 Sa'ud, 27, 28, 29, 30
 Sa'udi Arabia, 75, 76, 176, 186, 204, 205
 Sa'uds, 27-30, 65
 Sanscrit, 20
 Sayyid Ahmed, Sir, 211, 212
 Schacht, Hjalmar, Dr., 162
 Schirach, Baldur, Von, 116, 162, 163
 Semites, 9
 Semitic peoples, 5, 9
 Sengalese, 86
 Senussi (sect), 30, 42, 152, 153

 Servier, Andre, 207
 Seychells Islands, 120, 133
 Shaarawi, Ali, Pasha, 132
 Shabandar, Dr., 88
 Shabib, Kamul, 170
 Shafiism (sect), 64
 Shakespear, Captain, 54, 68
 Shakib Arslan, Amir, 60, 142-144, 146, 156
 Shammur, 54, 55, 63, 65-69
 Shamyl, 42
 Shaw, Walter, 113
 Shawkat, Asib, 164
 Shi'ya, or Shi'ites (sect), 8, 27, 30, 44, 46, 60, 64, 71, 73, 78, 92, 97, 213
 Sibawaihi, 21
 Sicily, 39, 188
 Sidi Ahmed, Bey, 148
 Sidqi Pasha, 136
 Sikhs, 29, 30
 Sinaitic Semites, 10
 Singleton, John E., 195
 Slavs, 159
 Smith, Eli, 79
 Socin, A., 160
 Sokoto, 29
 Solum, 157
 Somaliland, 151
 Sophia, 162
 Soviet Union, ix, xi (see Russia)
 Spain, 16-18, 32, 33, 37, 38, 141, 147
 Spaniards, 20, 33, 141
 Spanish Morocco, 146, 147
Squadristi, 158
 Stack, Lee, Sir, 135
 Stalingrad, ix
Statuto, 152
 Stefani Agency, 155
 Storrs, Ronald, 56
 Streicher, Julius, 116
Stuermer, 116
 Sublime Porte, 38, 53
 Sudan, 3, 29, 35, 42, 59, 133, 135-137, 151

- Suez Canal, 36, 126, 131, 133, 137,
 140, 150, 151, 196, 204
 Sultanoff, Abdul Rahman, xiii
 Sumatra, 30
 Sumerians, 9
 Sunna (traditions), 64, 212
 Sunni or Sunnites (Moslem sect.),
 8, 30, 46, 55, 64, 71, 78, 85, 96
 Supreme Moslem Council, 111
 Surah, 14, 15, 21
 Surah (city), 211
 Sweden, 37
 Swiss Code, 209
 Sykes-Picot Agreement, 83, 91
 Syria, xiii, 3, 6-8, 15, 17, 33-35, 38,
 40, 48, 49, 52, 56-61, 68, 76, 78-
 91, 93, 95, 101, 105-108, 116-118,
 120, 143, 151, 156, 157, 162-164,
 170-171, 174, 175, 182, 183, 186,
 197, 200-203, 205, 213, 215, 216
 Syriac (language), 4, 10
 Syrians, 7, 17, 20, 79, 82, 85, 90,
 197, 200

 Ta'lib Pasha, 93
 Taha, Hussain, Dr., 139, 212
 Taif, 71
 Taima, 11
 Talal (ibn Abdullah), 174
 Tamini, Amin, 177
 Tangier, 38, 40
 Tariq, 16
 Tartars, 9, 19, 49
 Teheran, 162, 173
 Tekin, Alp, 49
 Tel-el-Kabir, 128
 Tetuan, 146, 147, 199
 Teutonic Knights, 159
 Tewfiq, Khedive, 126, 129
 Tewfiq Nessim Pasha, 136
 Thaalbi, Sheikh, 145
Thousand and One Nights, xii, 21
 Tigris, 186
Times (London), 106, 107, 182,
 206
 Tiyaniya (Order), 142

 Tobruk, 183
 Tokyo, vii, 178
 Tours, 16
 Trajan, 10
 Transcaucasia, 49
 Transjordan, 60, 61, 69, 84, 90, 93,
 112, 174, 189, 203, 205
 Transjordan Frontier Force, 164
 Trans-Oxania, 11
 Tripoli, 3, 16, 151, 154, 183
 Tripolitania, 24, 33
 Trucial Sheikhdoms, 64, 176
 Truman, Harry S., 194, 195
 Tul-Karm, 117
 Tunis, 33, 45, 183
 Tunisia, 3, 18, 36, 40, 141, 142, 144-
 146, 148, 172, 180, 182
 Turanian race, 49
 Turkish Petroleum Company, 160
 Turkomans, 45, 49
 Turkey, xii, 39, 47-53, 61, 78, 79,
 88, 98, 99, 124, 163, 204, 209
 Turks, 7, 19, 21, 24, 27, 29, 30, 33,
 39, 46, 49, 51, 53-55, 60, 61, 66-
 68, 78, 81, 88, 89, 96, 124, 125,
 127, 131, 184, 188, 197, 210, 211

Ulema (Doctors of Moslem
 Law), 44, 48, 77, 143, 154
 United Nations, xiii, xiv, 148, 179,
 181, 184, 189-191, 204, 207, 215-
 217
 United Nations Charter, 189
 United States, ix-xiii, 3, 103, 176,
 181, 186, 195
 Uralo-Altic race, 49

 Vambery, 49
 Vichy, 148
 Vickery, C. E., Colonel, 107
 Vienna, 32, 163
 Violette-Blum-Bill, 144
 Visigoths, 16

 Wafd, 132, 133, 135-138, 140, 156
 Wafdists, 132-135, 137, 138

- Wahhabi (Moslem sect), 8, 25-31, 34, 47, 54, 55, 65, 66, 69, 71, 73, 76, 78, 211
 Wahhabism, 25, 64, 77, 214
 Wales, 194
 Walid, al, Halid Bey, 175
 Wallace, Henry A., 179
 Wardani, Ibrahim, 130
 Wavell, General, 60, 121, 158, 170
Wehrmacht, 166
 Weizmann, Chaim, Dr., 105, 113, 187
 Wellhausen, J., 160
Weltanschauung, 159
 White Paper, 112, 121-123, 194
 Wilhelm II (Kaiser), 39, 40, 159-161
 Wilmersdorf, 163
 Wilson, River, Sir, 126
 Wilson, Woodrow, 103, 104, 132, 145
 Wingate, Reginald, Sir, 132
 Woodhead Commission, the, 120
 World War I, ix, xv, 23, 40, 46, 50, 52, 63, 67, 68, 81, 89, 108, 114, 131, 152, 160, 165, 177, 179, 187, 197, 198, 200
 World War II, ix, xv, 101, 102, 122, 147, 148, 150, 161, 165, 168, 169, 176, 184, 186, 189, 215
 Yahya (Imam of the Yaman), 63, 69, 72, 73, 156, 176
 Yalta, xiii, 216
 Yaman (Yemen), 3, 4, 11, 23, 27, 47, 55, 60, 63, 72, 73, 76, 157, 176, 186, 201, 204, 205, 215
 Yarmuk, 15
 Yassin Pasha, 97, 98
 Yathrib (Medina), 11, 22
 Yazeji, Nasif, 79
 Y.M.M.A. (Young Men's Moslem Association), 48
 Young Turks, 49, 50, 81
 Yugoslavia, 172
 Yusef Bey Akhura Oglu, 49
 Zaghlul Pasha, Sa'ad, 131, 132, 133, 135, 136
 Zaidi (Moslem sect), 8, 215
Za'im, 156
 Zamakhshari, 21
 Zeesen, 165, 166, 175, 177
 Zionist idea, 38, 105, 109
 Zionist Organization, 105
 Ziya, Gok Alp, 50, 105
 Ziwar Pasha, 135

